



PRIVATE EYE

80p

NO. 791, FRIDAY, 10 APRIL, 1992



APRIL FOOLS



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If you'd like to know more about our unique whiskey, write to us for a free booklet at the Jack Daniel's Distillery, Lynchburg, Tennessee, USA.

Time to choose

THERE has been no fiercer critic of the Conservative government than this newspaper. We have not hesitated to draw attention to what we have perceived to be its many failings and inadequacies. Mr Major himself has not been immune from our strictures.

We may therefore with confidence lay claim to the role of an impartial observer of this election campaign.

It is in such a role that we advise our readers to consider for a moment what the consequences would be of electing a Labour government.

This is what we should see within 24 hours of Mr Kinnock's entry into 10 Downing Street:

- a total collapse of international confidence, followed by the biggest run on the pound in history
- mortgages up to 25%
- income tax raised by 50p in the pound
- confiscation of all private property
- gangs of lesbians roaming the streets taking all children into care
- Gerald Kaufmann as Foreign Secretary.

There can be no more frightening scenario for every man, woman and child in Britain to contemplate... Nightmare on Neil Kinnock Road... bring back Thatch... Vote Conservative ...Please.

PRIVATE EYE

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FOR YEARS to come, no doubt, people will recall the celebrated letter to *The Times* from 43 top businessmen calling on people to vote Tory for the sake of the "spirit of enterprise". How was this remarkable letter put together?

Observers have been struck by how many of the 43 names are associated with the cluster of charities formed by the Prince of Wales. The catch-all title for these is Business in the Community, which has office space provided for it in the luxurious new HQ of Grand Metropolitan, whose chairman is Sir Allen Shepherd, the leading signatory of the *Times* letter.

Another signatory, Neil Shaw, chairman of Tate & Lyle, is chairman of Business in the Community. The former chairman was Lord Laing of United Biscuits (another firm proud to be associated with *The Times* letter). Lord Laing is also a treasurer of the Conservative Party.

Not all the businessmen associated with this royal charity are so successful. They have included in recent years John Gunn of British Commonwealth (bust); John Ashcroft of Coloroll (bust); George Walker of Brent Walker (bust); and Stephen O'Brien, of Project Fullemploy (bust). Another not-so-successful businessman seconded in the mid-80s to work with the prince and his charities was Ian Maxwell, son of Megacrock.

THE Eye is anxious to trace David Hastie, one of the many witnesses who should have been called by the Commons trade and industry select committee during its inquiry into the supergun scandal.

Mr Hastie could have solved many of the unanswered questions of the affair — not least the involvement of the ministry of defence in the sale of arms to Saddam Hussein when there was an official government embargo on such sales to Iraq.

Hastie was employed in Baghdad by the MoD and British Aerospace, apparently at the same time. No one can be quite clear how he managed this circus act. The MOD disclosed to the committee that Hastie had been in Baghdad in 1989 "seconded to the ministry". When he went to the Baghdad arms fair, however, he was released by the ministry just for the time of the arms fair so that he could go and look at the supergun and make inquiries about the possibility of British Aerospace cashing in on the Baghdad arms bazaar.

Hastie would be a good man to answer some of the questions which remain over the supergun, such as:

- Who exactly were the members of the "Savoy Mafia" who met regularly to discuss the sale of arms to the Middle Eastern dictators, including Saddam and the Saudi king?
- Was British Aerospace an honoured guest at the Savoy meetings, hosted by the chairman of Lotus? If so, did the other arms companies learn from BAe's success in selling Hawk missiles to the Saudis?
- Was Mark Thatcher represented (or even present himself) at these meetings?
- What role did Mark Thatcher play in the Hawk-Saudi deal, originally negotiated by his mother?
- Was there a secret plan by intelligence and right-wing businessmen to subvert the foreign office embargo on arms to Iraq?
- Did this infuriate the foreign secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, who had so eloquently committed the Government to the embargo in 1985?

The problem is that Mr Hastie seems to have disappeared. The ministry and British Aerospace say they don't even have a forwarding address for him. If anyone can help the *Eye* to get in touch with him, please do so.

COLOUR SECTION

AS THE countdown to the imposition of United Nations sanctions against Libya proceeds inexorably, so does the likelihood of a military strike by Washington or London.

Arabs are enraged by what they say is the "unbelievably clumsy" handling of the Lockerbie affair in the United States and United Kingdom. They insist that the allies (who went public early on and blocked negotiations by refusing a more discreet diplomatic approach) have now backed themselves into a corner and dragged everyone else into it. This is because of their overriding need to be seen to be doing something about Lockerbie in an election year.

The crass handling of the Libyan crisis, they warn, is creating a growing and totally unnecessary political crisis in the already volatile Middle East. Arabs — even those (nearly all) who have no love for Gadaffi or Libya — deeply resent continuation of attitudes displayed during the Gulf War. The mounting anti-western backlash is, insist observers, playing into the hands of the fundamentalists who have a growing foothold in North Africa.

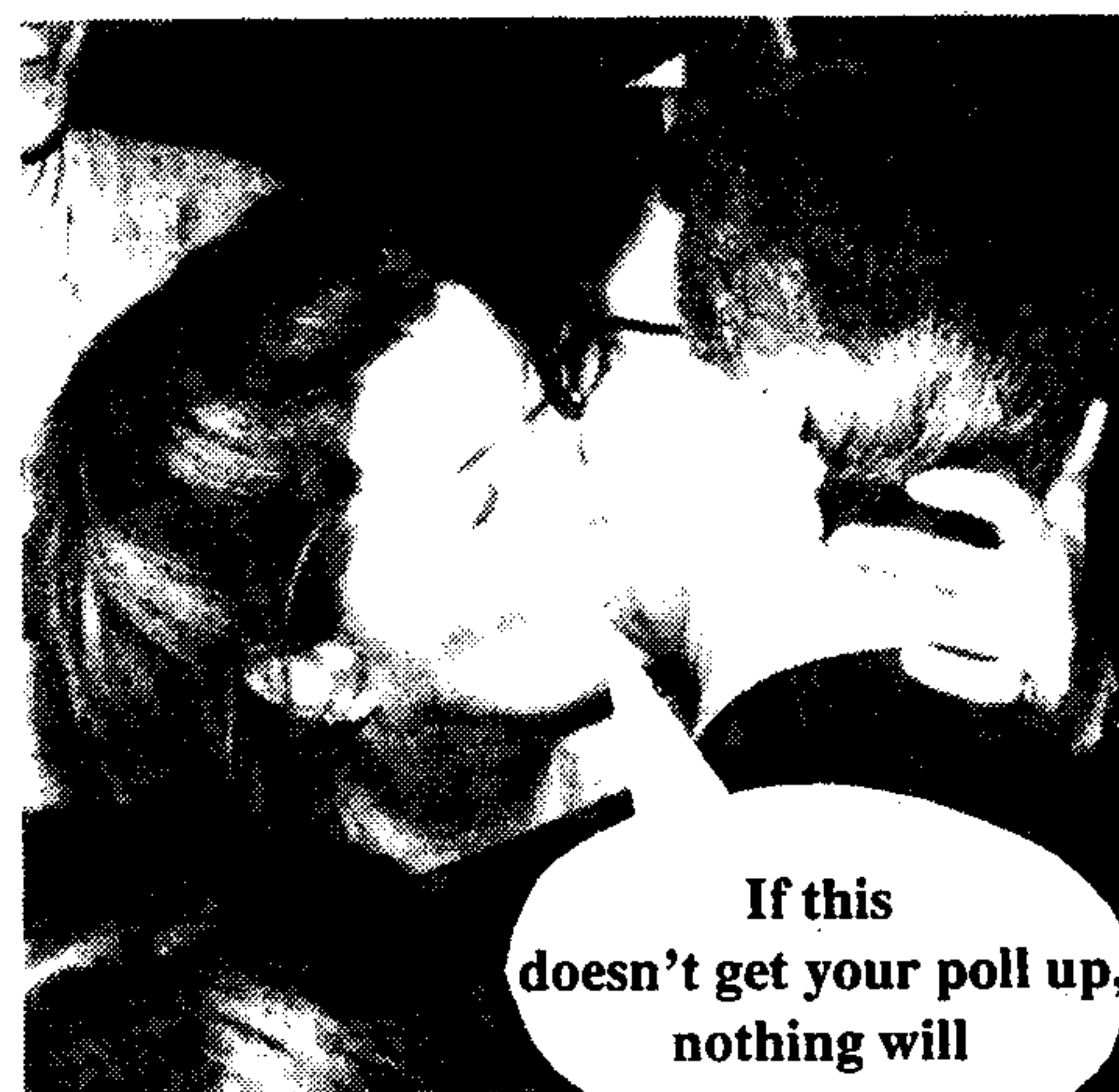
Most worrying of all, Iraqi president Saddam Hussein is being rehabilitated as a result of the Libyan crisis and is telling anyone who will listen that he was right about the west all along. Significantly, Colonel Gadaffi has just sent Saddam a message seeking closer relations...

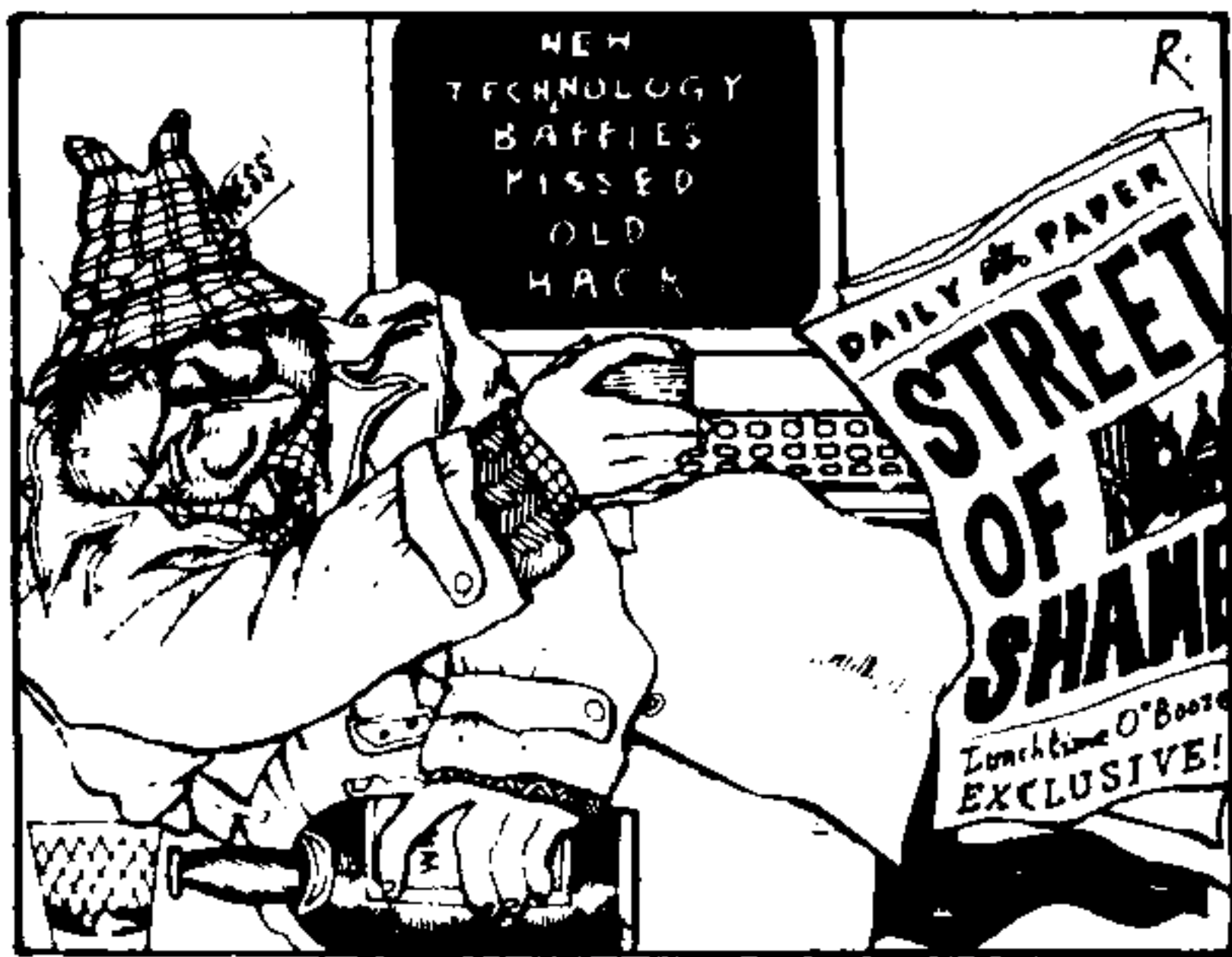
KINNOCHIO's promise that all privatisations in the pipeline will go through on the nod from any future Labour government came as a profound relief in the boardroom of Tarmac.

There they are licking their chops at the prospect of buying the Government's lucrative Property Services Agency — and being paid a reported £84 million sweetener to do so.

However, Tarmac's good fortune will not be toasted by C&G Roofing of Warminster, taken on as a subcontractor for Tarmac at the Trident submarine base at Faslane, Scotland. When the roofing firm became short of money, Tarmac enticed it into a deal whereby Tarmac got a hefty slice of the money being claimed by the roofing firm from the ministry of defence and 2 per cent of all future contracts won by C&G.

In February 1991 C&G went bust and sacked all its workers. On 27 June 1991, Wilkie Reinforcements was named in the Commons as another Tarmac subcontractor at Faslane — which was owed £703,433 by Tarmac. The unions at PSA, which have strongly supported the return of a Labour government, are opposed to the sale to Tarmac.





WHY has the *Sunday Express's* election coverage been so abysmal? Because it has been run by Conservative Central Office.

When Labour's tax proposals were announced, *Express* City staff were told to find someone who would say they would be worse off under Labour. When the unhappy punters failed to materialise, Shaun Woodward, the Central Office communications superno, telephoned in with his own list. Yes, these punters were all unhappy — and yes they were all Tories.

Another reason for the pisspoor coverage is that Eve Bollard, the editor, has hired drunken oaf Bruce "Brute" Anderson to do nothing more than follow Neil Kinnock around and berate him.

Central Office will breathe a sigh of relief at the end of the campaign for it will no longer have the odious Brute hanging around. The foul-mouthed Celtic yob has turned up at pre-press briefings, gone into offices uninvited or unannounced full of juice, and berated party chairman Chris Patten and Woodward for the Tories' pisspoor performance.

THE grandness of Eve Pollard — or Lady Lloyd, as she likes to be known — is reaching dizzying heights.

In a memo to hacks at the *Sunday Express*, milady says she is annoyed by the number of staff who stop and talk to her as she makes her regal progress along the editorial corridor.

In future, she orders, they will be permitted to bid her "Good Morning" (with, presumably, a slight bow or curtsy) but must then go on their way without another word.

A FORTNIGHT ago the *Observer* printed an apology to Alastair Brett, the *Sunday Times's* lawyer, for having "wrongly suggested" that he had "offered to pay money to a criminal in Brixton prison in return for evidence needed in a libel case".

In fact, it went on, he had never interviewed the prisoner, and no money had been paid. "We accept that Mr Brett acted in no way improperly in this matter and apologise if our item carried any other implication."

How strange. During the libel case in question — that of Carmen Proetta v. the *Sunset Times* — Alastair Brett did indeed pay money to the family of a criminal in return for his cooperation, and was rebuked in the high court for doing so. The man was Joseph Wilkins, a convicted drug smuggler who told Brett that he would give a statement about Proetta if his sister were paid £2,000 — which Brett duly arranged. As *Eye* readers will recall, Wilkins escaped from jail in mysterious circumstances shortly after giving his statement.

Brett's complaint to the *Observer* suggests that the payment of witnesses is still a sore point for him. When the subject was raised during a pre-trial hearing last year, he promptly burst into tears. Hence his nickname — "blubber Brett".

A SERIOUS outbreak of Fester's Disease has erupted at the *London Evening Standard*, which shares a building in Kensington with Sir David's *Daily Mail*.

The symptoms are obvious — an uncontrollable urge to cry "Vote Tory!" whatever the economic indicators — and a recent news "story" by Lois Rogers shows that the disease has now become terminal.

Rogers was reporting on a survey by the British Medical Association that showed that of 35,000 general practitioners, 62 percent were against the notion of running their own budgets.

The rabidly pro-Tory *Standard's* interpretation was novel: "FAMILY doctors are moving towards the idea of holding their own purse strings, according to a survey today."

A certain instability was also evident in the rag's reporting that the chairman of British Gas had received a pay rise of £1,354 a week. The pink City pages said: "It is easy to score cheap points by criticising the level of the increase. But... the salary was determined by non-executive directors who believed that it was important to pay the going international market rate if they wanted to extract the best for the company. If shareholders do not think they are getting value for money they should say so. Otherwise the free market must rule."

Turning back to the cheap and cheerful leader on page 9, the reader was confronted with the following: "What a gas! A rise of 17.6 percent is a matter of public concern. Last year the profits of British Gas fell by 4 percent. In hard times the chairmen of large companies have a duty to set their workers an example. Britain has a struggle to keep her unit labour costs competitive with those of her European partners. Pay rises out of turn are counter-productive economically and disastrous during an election."

This appears alongside an article by Norman Tebbit complaining that Neil Kinnock was inconsistent.

THE journalistic career of Sebastian "Flyte" Shakespeare, the exotic sidekick of *Evening Standard* diarist Rory "Blanche" Knight-Bruce, seems to have hit the rails.

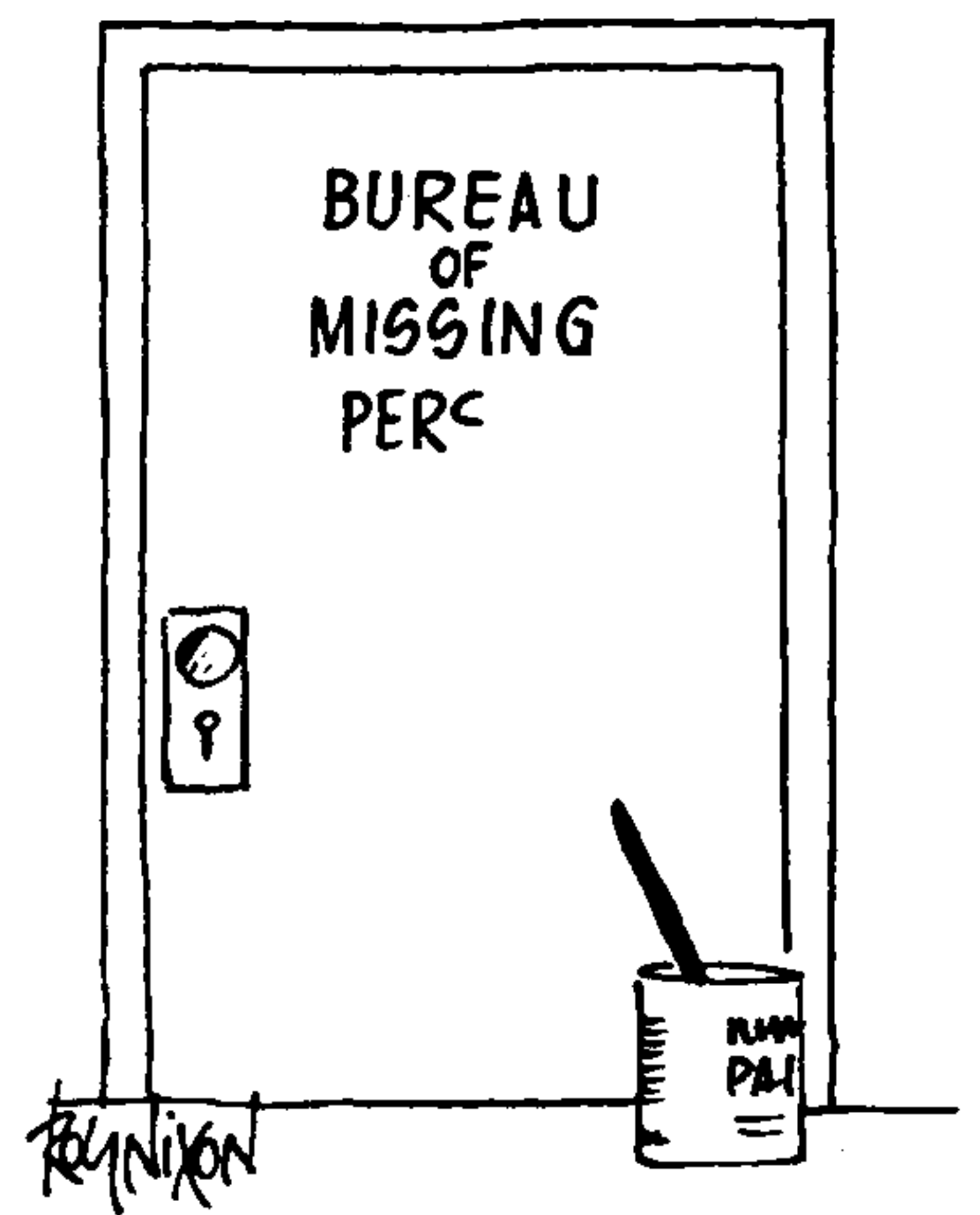
Following a recent four-hour lunch with Lord Snowdon, Shakespeare lurched back to the office with the hot news that his lordship had attacked the grand new Lanesborough Hotel for its lack of facilities for the disabled.

This story was duly published in London's *Diary* the next day, whereupon the paper was bombarded with menacing letters from the hotel — and from Lord Snowdon, who pointed out that he had in fact criticised Lancaster House, not the Lanesborough. Poor Shakespeare had been so tired and emotional that the distinction between the two had apparently eluded him.

The *Standard* has now been forced to print a grovelling apology to all concerned, and Shakespeare has been ordered to spend a week's unpaid leave at home "to rest and contemplate your error".

UNITED Newspapers' decision to kill off *Punch* cannot have surprised anyone familiar with the unsentimental attitude of Lord Stevens and his executives to the publications they control.

In the current edition of the house journal for United's provincial newspapers, managing director Michael Toulmin makes a typically bare-faced admission about the company's priorities. "Our primary business", he boasts, "is advertising."



PUNCH's last-ever cartoon editor, Paul Thomas, was commissioned to write a valedictory article about the magazine's artists for the *Grauniad* two weeks ago. Before it appeared, however, the *Grauniad's* art editor, Jocelyn "Miss" Targett, made a few alterations.

First, he added a lengthy plug for "thrusting young innovators like Caplin & Jeremy and Steven Appleby" — illustrators who, as coincidence would have it, are friends and protégés of Targett.

Second, in a passage where Thomas mentioned other magazines that use cartoons — "like *Private Eye*, the *Spectator* and the *Oldie*" — Targett deleted the name of the *Oldie*, a magazine against which he has an obsessive grudge.

Finally, without consulting him, Targett inserted under Thomas's by-line an attack on "that old *Punch*-bore [sic] Richard Ingrams" and "his execrable magazine, the *Oldie*". As it happened, Paul Thomas was about to pen a letter to the *Oldie* asking for work. The luckless cartoonist fears that his career prospects may now have been blighted by Targett's half-witted antics.

HACKS at the *Sun* should be warned that their newly-appointed news editor, Graham Dudman, has a rather disagreeable party trick: to "floss" his nose with a condom. The prophylactic is snorted up one nostril and then ejected through his mouth.

THERE has been a sighting of our old chum Tony Frost, sacked as deputy editor of the *Sunday Mirror* two years ago after being caught with his finger in the till.

Frost has now surfaced in Los Angeles, where he is representing that thoughtful journal, the *National Inquirer*. Alas! Within days of his arrival, Frostie was helping police with their inquiries, having been arrested for speeding.

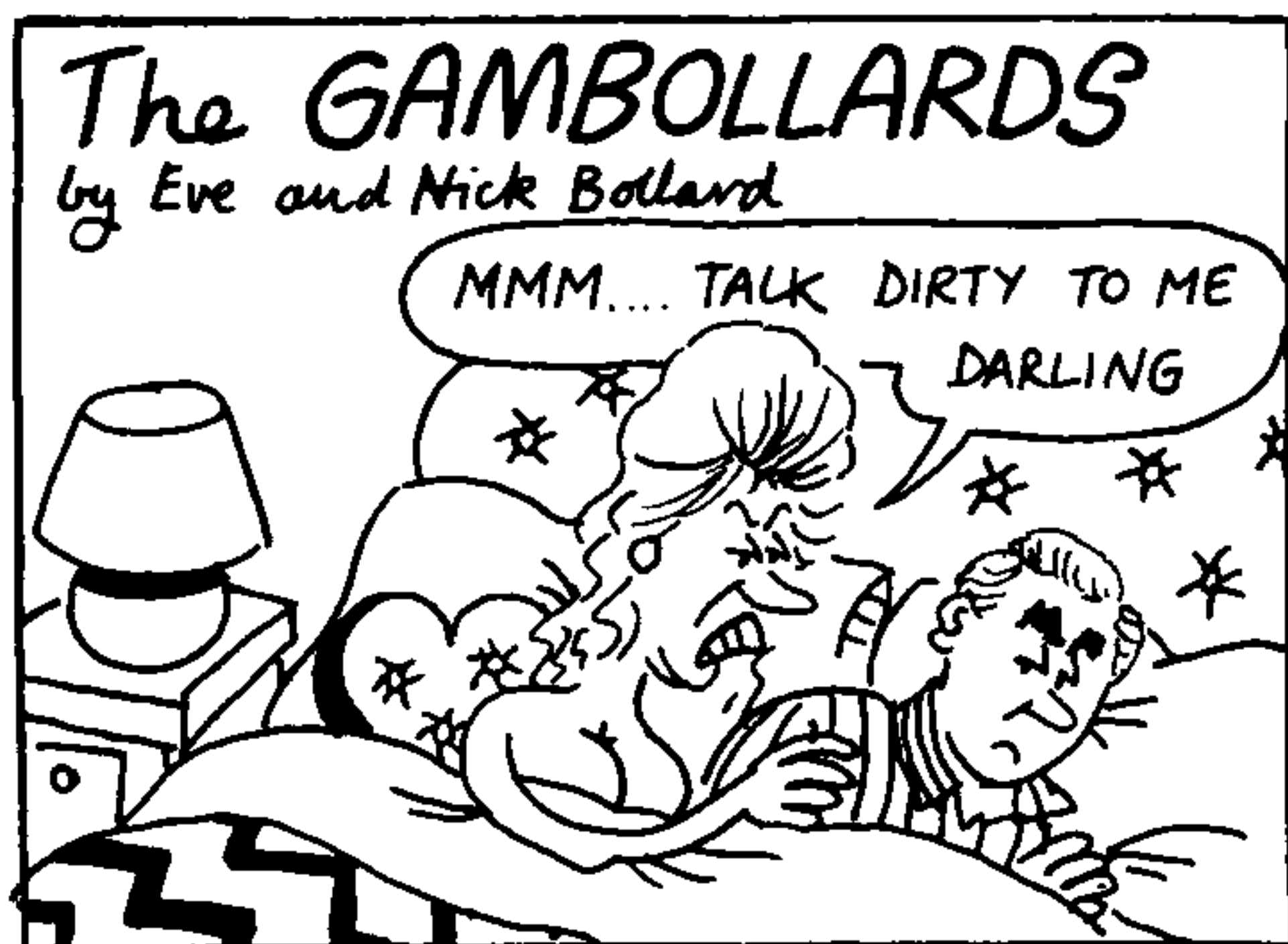
Pleading for mercy, the seedy hack said he was new in town and didn't understand the American highway code. This cut no ice: he was fined and ordered to attend a "traffic school" for a course of remedial lessons.

DENIZENS of the *Sun*-bunker at Wapping are beginning to wonder whether it was such a good idea to re-hire Garry Bushell after his brief dalliance with the *Daily Star* last autumn.

Even Kelvin Mackenzie now finds his erstwhile mate a bit over-the-top: a couple of weeks ago he had to tone down Garry's report of the Bafta dinner — in the original version, film director Derek Jarman was described as an "Aids-ridden creep".

Nor will the born-again Christian Rupert Murdoch be amused to learn that Garry is a close friend of Andrew Russell, who is currently a Category A prisoner serving a 10-year stretch as a guest of Her Maj. Russell was convicted in 1989 for his part in organising the famous helicopter jailbreak from Gartree prison: he was the one who actually hijacked the helicopter, holding a gun to the head of the terrified pilot and forcing him to land on the prison playing-field.

Bushell receives regular letters from his unsavoury chum ("Ahoy Gal... I hope you're okay, along with Carol and the kids"). Their association goes back about 15 years to when Russell was a leader of the Inter City Firm of football thugs and also a roadie for the Cockney Rejects — a skinhead band managed by one G. Bushell.





CONCERN for the rehabilitation of offenders and the mentally ill will take me to two public engagements next week.

The first is the opening of a dinosaur exhibition at the Natural History Museum in south Kensington. It will be attended by the Princess of Wales, no less, and Mr Gerald Ronson, the well-known businessman and entrepreneur; and will be held in a room that bears his name, The Ronson Gallery.

I shall be berating the museum's ungrateful staff as they have apparently renamed the venue as The Rogue's Gallery, and I believe this to be a cruel slur on an old crook who still hob-nobs with royalty just because he's rich (*Shurely "generous museum trustee who has paid his debt to society"? Ed.*)

Next I shall visit Cranfield where I hope to witness a miracle of medical science — a cure for Alzheimer's Disease. Incredibly, the man who suffered so much during the Guinness trial and was released early from Ford Open Prison because of his "irreversible pre-senile dementia" is hosting "An Evening With Ernest Saunders".

Mr Saunders will talk about the Guinness turnaround, corporate governance, managerial risk and the role of the chairman and chief executive officer. "He is keen to answer questions", I am told. Golly. He *must* be feeling better.

DON'T expect the horizontal jogging techniques of Bill Clinton, the Democrat who would be president of the United States, to feature quite so prominently between now and the November poll.

The United States is a prurient country indeed, but the theory of mutual deterrence is holding up in this presidential campaign. George Bush's team may have let the stickier aspects of the Gennifer Flowers affair go by, but pundits have wondered why they did not then call attention to the fact that Clinton had also put his former floozie on the state pay-roll.

The answer is clear. Arkansas is a non-union low wage state and Gennifer earned a mere \$17,000 from the taxpayers. Bush's own alleged paramour, Jennifer, has a high-ranking federal job — worth more like \$100,000!

● **NATHANIEL** Rothschild, son of merchant banker Jacob, has distinguished himself as a history student at Wadham college, Oxford, by failing Mods.

Of course, he insists that he got in to Wadham from Eton without any assistance from his father's purse. Whose name, however, appears under the heading Donors of over £100,000 to the Wadham Appeal in the college gazette? Why, none other than Jacob Rothschild.

Nonetheless Nathaniel has made a big splash at Oxford with a publishing venture. Together with Christopher Coleridge, son of Lloyds of London chairman David Coleridge, Nathaniel started a tabloid magazine called *Rumpus*, which went out of business after a single issue.

Pseud's Corner

Dear Species

I am very pleased to take part in your musical evolution, because it is too late for us. Well, fuck it... hum de dum. Jolly jolly. Bye bye. Nigel

Nigel Kennedy

Preface to Nigel Kennedy tour programme



And I opened it. It was like being hit by a sledgehammer. I shut the book. Then I tried again and this time it was a wee bit easier. Someone was communicating with me. Someone was getting through. I did not bother with the meaning. I knew that my unconscious would pick it up and deal with it. I was frightened. Maybe it was only this poem that works, I thought. I flipped slowly through the pages and was reassured, though the prose poems seemed to have the edge. Tears rose in my eyes as I realised the scale of what had happened. Twenty-seven years, starving in the desert, utterly alone, and along comes Burnside and feeds my soul (in the lay sense).

IVOR CUTLER (reviewing John Burnside's *Feast Days*)
Sunday Times

Tony Giddens, Professor of Sociology at Cambridge University, spoke to a seminar of the new Institute for Gender Research on Thursday 27 February. The analysis of gender relations is a new turn in the work of Britain's leading social theorist, and the subject of his next book.

His thesis is that the changing relations between women and men are connected with the development of late modernity. Late modernity is characterised by processes of globalisation; post-traditionalism; and institutional reflexivity. This involves a transformation of intimacy, and of the reflexive project of the construction of the lifecourse, which is an emotional as well as cognitive project. The self becomes a reflexive project. Lifestyle is an important sociological notion constituted by continuously taken routing decisions which affect body as well as self. Risk is a crucial concept of late modernity. At a global level we are entering upon an open ended experiment.

London School of Economics
circular

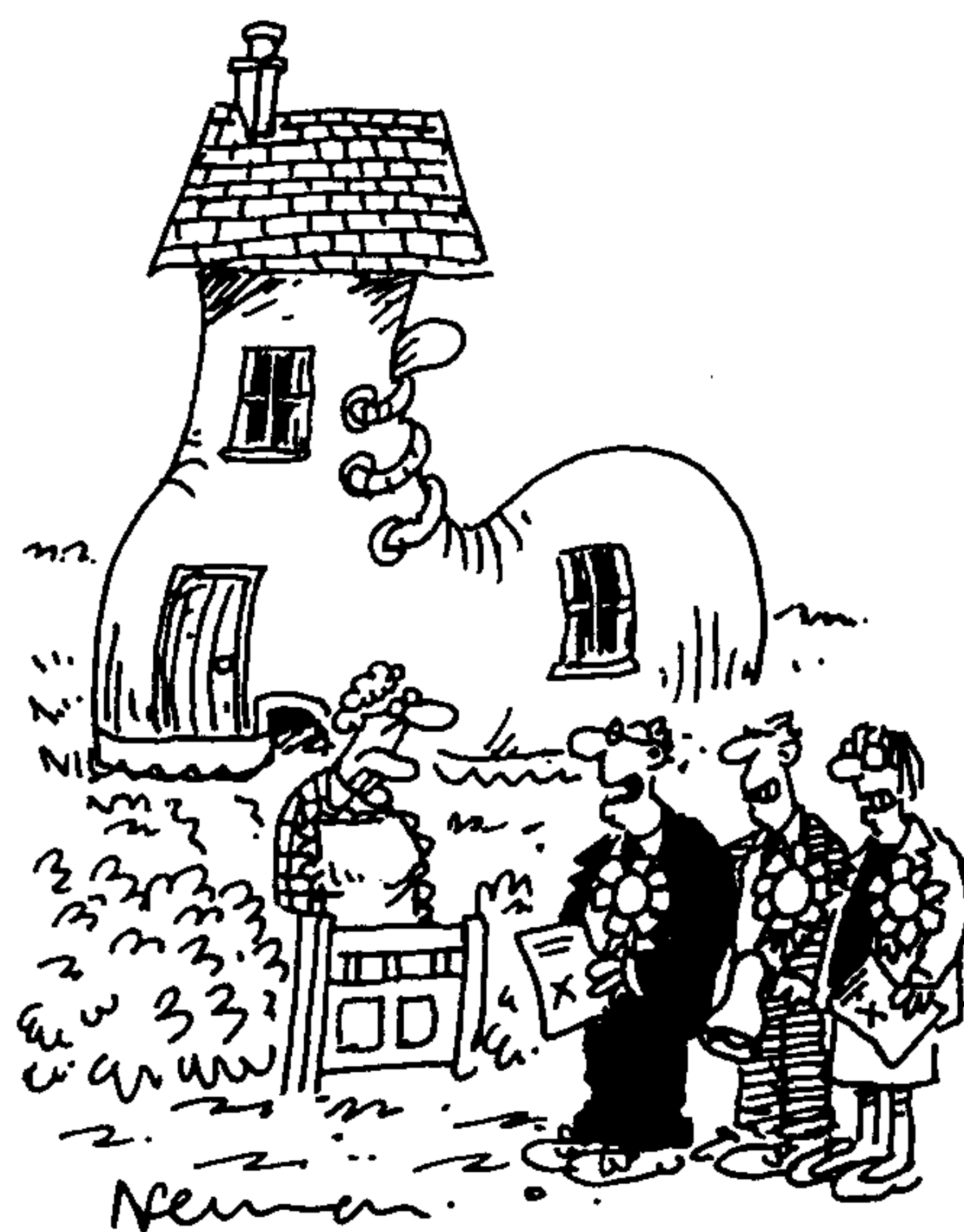


I'd like to be someone totally different, someone who does not live in the limelight all the time. I'd like to be a housewife with six children, because I can't imagine what they would be like. It might be fun.

KYLIE MINOGUE
Radio Times

CONTRIBUTORS: Dr Barra Chaim,
C.N. Gilmore, Max Steuer, Caroline Merz.

£10 paid for entries



"I understand you're a 'don't know what to do'"

● **NORMAN** TEBBIT may be withdrawing from active politics, but there's nothing retiring about his wit or his political views, I'm happy to report.

A local radio journalist telephoned the man who invented the racially pure cricket test, seeking a quote about a set of political playing cards that carried caricatures of leading politicians for the various court cards.

"What about John Major as the ace of spades?" she asked.

"Surely Bernie Grant should be the ace of spades," quipped Norm, celebrated wit.

LADY COLIN CAMPBELL, the hermaphrodite "society hostess" who recently published a pisspoor "scandalous" book about Princess Diana, is furious with Lady (Nicholas) Lloyd.

Lady Lloyd, a.k.a. Eve Bollard, editor of the *Sunday Express*, had agreed to buy the serialisation rights to Lady Colin Campbell's book, but she ultimately balked at the tasteless, though dreary, contents.

The serialisation rights were bought by *The Sun* instead. Asked by an Australian hack what she thought of Bollard, Lady Colin Campbell said: "All I know about Eve Pollard is that she has two enormous breasts... and I hope they both explode."

TO THE set of *Lawrence*, a TV epic about Lawrence of Arabia and the Arab peace conference after the First World War, where in an idle moment various thespians discuss where they would rather be at the time.

Most of them choose exotic holiday locations, but the venerable Sir John Gielgud is in altogether more playful mood. "I'd like," he declares, "to be beneath a big black man."

Sir John then describes in detail exactly what he would like the big black man to be doing — and drives home his point, as it were, by making the following noise: "Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!"

● **I** HEAR that a rather sleazy assistant editor from the *Daily Mail* recently took the actor Nigel Havers to lunch. Havers, perplexed at the Mail's generosity, chomped and quaffed to his heart's content, but couldn't fathom why the Mail hack was so eager to please.

All was revealed at the end of lunch when the hack lurched toward Havers and offered him "thirty thousand for a compromising picture of Fergie". The saintly thespian was having none of it. He thanked the Mail man for lunch, made his excuses and left.

Pip Pip!

Election



Special

THE Welsh Windbag's minders pulled out all the stops to make Neil Kinnock's presidential-style election campaign look slick, but an old-style socialist shambles was never far behind.

Hacks covering the Windbag's address at Sheffield, for example, boarded a double decker press special to take them back to East Midlands airport after a fruitless quest for an interview with the man who has changed his political spots more often than most people change their underpants.

The bus had been parked on a wet verge and during Windbag's long address had sunk in the mud and would not budge. The doughty hacks thus piled into a handy off-licence to stock up on beer and wait for a relief bus. Sadly, this second bus broke down on the M1 with neither the AA nor a toilet in sight. Newspaper deadlines were soon forgotten as more pressing personal needs became a priority.

Eventually the airport lavatories were invaded by the bursting press corps. As the sighs of relief went round, mobile phones balanced delicately on the urinals, who should run in but Kinnockio himself, making a beeline for the nearest empty receptacle.

What followed was an unseemly mass-struggle with zips as the urinating hacks rushed to commit the thoughts of a trapped Windbag on to whatever paper came to hand.

JOHN MAJOR'S brave bid to take his soap box to the rotten borough of Bent, north London, was called off amid farcical scenes even though the Conservatives had booked a local hall and hundreds of Special Branch police dogs had been up half the night sniffing for bombs.

The visit had been arranged after a request from Bent councillor Nkechi Amalu-Johnson (*Eyes passim*), an eccentric black nationalist fanatic who defected from Labour to Conservative last year and helped install the Tories as new council leaders. The notorious Amazulu, hopelessly drunk on her own sense of self-importance, as *Eye* readers will recall, had written: "As prime minister I [*sic*] more than appreciate your commitment and time..."

Not wishing to snub its unlikely allies, Conservative Central Office booked out Bridge Park Community Centre in the Stonebridge Park area of Brent. Perhaps they should have read *Eye* 788 first: Bridge Park, a failed project aimed at taking Bent's black youth off the street, recently lost council support after failing to account for £10 million worth of public money.

It has also been a much-patronised venue for Bent's section of the Black Panthers, many of whom are currently being retained at Her Maj's pleasure. Once Bridge Park users had been told that Major was to be the star turn word quickly spread to the posse on the street, from where phone calls were made to Inspector Knacker warning of the illin' consequences should the rally take place.

WHEN the new bugs arrive in the Commons next week one of their first tasks will be to get a proper job.

Naive voters may believe that MPs work full-time on their behalf, but this is of course utter nonsense. The impoverished new boy or girl (£30,000 annual salary, plus free travel and office and accommodation allowances) will soon be propositioning companies and political lobbying firms for consultancies and directorships.

By selling their services and information, MPs can rake in an extra £60,000 a year, plus shareholdings. They are not obliged to declare the amounts in the register of members' interests, and the *Eye* can reveal that the select committee on members' interests will once again reject a move for MPs to disclose the cash they receive for services rendered.

The committee's report, held over until after the election, will argue that the declaration of amounts of money would be an intrusion into the privacy of MPs. The MPs who voted against disclosure of cash all have several paid consultancies!

Declaring information about Lloyds'

membership was also a source of contention on the committee. A motion for MPs to disclose details of individual Lloyds' syndicates was passed, but only after opposition by two committee members, Robert Adley and Peter Viggers, who abstained. By a remarkable coincidence, Adley and Viggers are both underwriting members of Lloyds.

TORY MP and Euro-fanatic Hugh Dykes has, like many MPs, been lobbying ministers on behalf of one of his clients.

Last August the British firm CSL Ltd was pressing the foreign office for financial aid to fulfil a telecommunications contract in Kenya. CSL co-opted MPs of all parties in its campaign and ensured they had no relevant financial interest. CSL also told its international law firm, Rogers and Wells, about the contract; but, unknown to CSL, Rogers and Wells then turned to Hugh Dykes for help.

Dykes was the law firm's consultant and he immediately wrote a letter to foreign office minister Lynda Chalker, urging her to help CSL win the contract: "This seems on the face of it an excellent opportunity to expand further UK high-tech trade in Kenya... Could I ask you to consider this application PERSONALLY. If you feel that I can assist by arranging for CSL directors to come in to see you and your officials, I would be happy to do so."

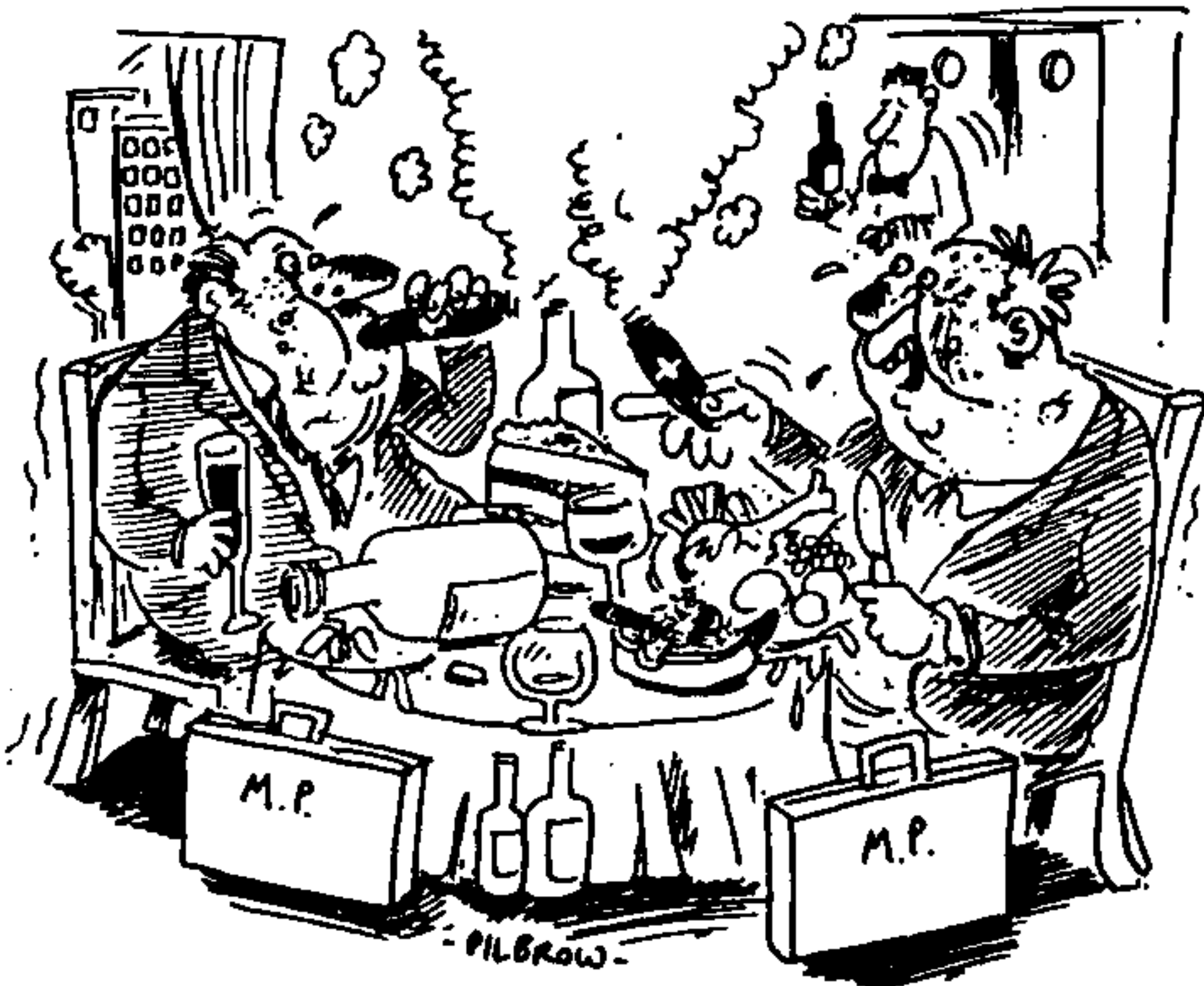
Dykes declared his consultancy with CSL's law firm in the letter almost as an afterthought — "one of my interests, by the way, is that I am an advisor to Rogers and Wells". But at the time he failed to disclose it in the register of members interests, a clear breach of the rules.

WHEN John Browne, then Tory MP for Winchester, was found guilty by fellow MPs in 1987 of not declaring the enormous sums he received from businesses in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere, commentators mused as to his singularly lenient sentence — a few days' suspension.

Most print observers concluded that a deal had been done with the Tory whips, whereby Browne would be allowed to keep his seat in Parliament in exchange for agreeing to go quietly before the next election.

Nothing of the kind has happened. John Browne has been campaigning hard in Winchester against the official Tory candidate, calling himself "the people's choice" and a "true Conservative", and describing the election as a "test case" to decide whether "the people" should take precedence over a handful of officials who, he suggests, deselected him in a backroom coup. Nowhere in his literature does he mention:

- His consistent failure to disclose his enormous business interests.
- His historic achievement in being paid £170,000 by his first wife, Lizzie, who divorced him on account of his adultery.



"Health is the issue of the 'nineties"

● His consistent support for the Nicaraguan Contras against even the policy of his own party and government — and his friendship with the family of the former dictator of Nicaragua, Somoza.

Instead, in lavish literature Browne poses as a decent man, done down by bureaucrats. In one moving speech he said there were two main Tory victims of faceless party officials of recent years: himself and Mrs Thatcher.

PS: There is no mystery about who is paying for Browne's expensive campaign. After ditching and bankrupting his first wife, Browne married an American heiress — to a fortune made from condoms.

PHILIP DAVIES, the Tory candidate for Copeland whom we castigated in the last *Eye* for his mismanagement of pension fund monies belonging to employees of the *North West Evening Mail*, has also had a less than thoroughly salubrious private life.

Davies claims to be a Quaker and used to tell the staff of the *Evening Mail*: "I don't smoke, I don't drink and I don't chase women." Yet he certainly pursued a young woman trainee reporter when she joined the paper in 1987. The NUJ chapel complained that he was sexually harassing her, but he claimed it was a serious relationship.

When Davies's wife joined him from their mansion in Chagford, Devon, the girlfriend was sent away on a round-the-world cruise.

IF LABOUR forms the next government, one head that will certainly roll is that of Sir Terry Burns, head of the treasury and a Thatcherite appointee if ever there was one.

At 48 he's too young to retire and too grand to resume his former part-time job as a statistical consultant to advertising agencies. He will be succeeded by the second permanent secretary, Nicholas Monck, who is very much one of the new "us" and has spent the last 13 years trying to live down the reputation he made as Denis Healey's private secretary.

Monck and his friend William Plowden (son of the two Rs woman, Lady P) are both buddies of Baroness Blackstone, Kinnock's close adviser. Plowden will be recalled from obscurity and become head of the Central Policy Review Staff, which Blackstone is determined to revive. Needless to say Sarah Hogg, head of John Major's policy unit [*What policy? Ed.*] at Number Ten, will vanish faster than the speed of light.

And who will replace Sir Alan Budd in the key post of chief economic adviser? Step forward Gavyn Davies, who happens to be married to Kinnock's secretary. After several years as a partner in Goldman Sachs, Robert Maxwell's favourite finance house, Davies can afford to join the lowly-paid in the public service.

Balliol don Andrew Graham, who is a lot cleverer than Davies, would make a better choice if it were not for one snag: he is strongly in favour of devaluation.

THE prospect of John Prescott's arrival as transport secretary has caused many sleepless nights in Whitehall where at least three top transport officials have been too closely identified with rail privatisation for their own good.

As "sound" and "unsound" acquire different meanings, the three musketeers will almost certainly be changing trains. On the other hand, Edward Osmotherley, cast in Siberian darkness after a sensationally short stint as deputy secretary in charge of public transport (he believed in it), will, no doubt, experience a renaissance.

The permanent secretary, Patrick Brown, specially imported from the environment department where he ardently privatised water, will find himself on the transfer list, as will deputy secretary David Rowlands, who replaced Osmotherley.

Philip Wood, the under secretary directly in charge of rail privatisation, may conceivably be spared. He was lucky enough not to have had any of his seven nonsensical draft white papers published.

IF A LABOUR government takes office, watch out for Marjorie Mowlem, a Bennite firebrand in the early 1980s, now Labour's very amenable and reasonable spokesperson on City and corporate affairs.

In a recent letter to the *Independent*, Mowlem argued that the insurance giant Lloyds of London was not capable of self-regulation. "We believe," she wrote, "that Lloyds should be subject to full external regulation by the Securities and Investments Board or similar body, as we originally argued when the Financial Services Bill was going through Parliament."

Mowlem might find a less embarrassing way of putting the argument. When the matter of Lloyds' self-regulation was discussed in the Commons in 1982, members favoured the recommendation of a four-strong subcommittee which had been set up to discuss all the Lloyds options. The committee unanimously recommended a new parliamentary bill which handed over all powers to regulate Lloyds to, er, Lloyds. The committee argued passionately against any form of external regulation.

Was the committee led by the nose by wealthy Tories, all associated with Lloyds? Not a bit of it. Its chairman was another former Bennite firebrand, now Marjorie Mowlem's Labour front-bench colleague, Michael "Very Working Class" Meacher.

ALMOST THE only would-be London Labour MP to escape categorisation as a "loony lefty" in the Tory's recent "exposé" of hard-line

socialists in the People's Party was Kate Hoey.

But this says more about the shabby quality of Tory Central Office research than about the pristine past of the woman the Kinnockites have imposed on the unfortunate voters of Vauxhall.

Ms Hoey's Northern Irish origins are obvious to anyone who has heard her speak, and her Protestant background is revealed by her support for the Unionist-inspired campaign to get the Labour Party to stand candidates in the six counties. But is this the whole story?

In 1972, in the wake of the Bloody Sunday massacre in Derry, the Anti-Internment League called a march through Westminster. Although declared illegal, the demonstration was attended by several thousand angry Irish people and their supporters, ending in violence and a number of arrests.

Among those apprehended was a young woman member of a small Trotskyite sect involved in the demo's organisation. There was talk of very serious charges. And the identity of this woman? Surely not the same Kate Hoey?

FULL-PAGE ads in the "quality" press for the Natural Law Party may look like an attempt to woo the floating voter, but they are merely the latest move by an Indian holy man to set up a world government based on the principles of transcendental meditation.

While many may have dabbled with TM in an attempt to reduce high blood pressure or stress, the

TM movement, which is at the heart of the Natural Law Party's philosophy, is regarded as a religious cult in America where it is being sued for fraud.

The Natural Law Party is part of the World Government of the Age of Enlightenment (proprietor "maharishi" Mahesh Yogi) based in Maharishi Nagal, India.

Floating and non-flying voters may also like to mull over the fact that a large study by the West German government found that TM had a detrimental effect on an individual's decision-making processes.

Among the line-up of would-be MPs for the Natural Law Party is one Leslie Davis, prospective parliamentary candidate in Watford. Could this be the same Leslie Davis who, along with Dr Roger Chalmers, was struck off by the General Medical Council for serious professional misconduct on 21 October last year?

Dr Davis, who was registered at Mentmore Towers, Leighton Buzzard, the national seat of the Natural Law Party, had been using TM-style Maharishi Ayur-Ved medicine to treat AIDS patients.

The GMC took a dim view of the fact that the now ex-doctor had prescribed his Harley Street patients "three substances known as MA608, MA609 and MA610, the nature of which were unknown to him... and which contained matter which was potentially harmful to the patient..." (excrement).

'Backbiter'

NOOKS and CORNERS

CERTIFICATES of immunity from listing are curious things. They tend to be issued by the department of the environment to friends the Government does not want to inconvenience, like the South Bank board. But why should any building be "immune" from being architecturally or historically important for a limited period of time? Either a thing is worth protecting, or it isn't.

And who decides if a building deserves such a certificate? The DoE's statutory advisers, English Heritage? Not usually: just civil servants at Marsham Street who may not possess the fine aesthetic judgement we should surely expect from those issuing potential sentences of death to buildings.

A curious case in Kidderminster exposes the dubious morality of these certificates. The buildings in question are those that form a "triple institute of literature, science and art": the old School of Art, School of Science and Public Library. All are white brick and stone Italianate, built in 1879-94 and designed by a local man, J.M. Gething. Kidderminster is not exactly over-endowed with distinguished architecture, so such buildings are all the more valuable: Professor Pevsner noted: "The three buildings almost create a Civic Centre. A pity no more was made of them."

A pity indeed. Oblivious of the fact that these buildings were built by public subscription, that they housed the first ever educational institution dedicated to the design and manufacture of carpets, and that they could be converted or adapted, Hereford and Worcester county council regards them as surplus to requirement and wants to replace them: ostensibly by a new library on the site. Others, however, regard the Old Schools of Arts and Science more highly and, in October



1991, an application was made to the DoE, supported by the Victorian Society, to have the school statutorily listed.

After a visit by inspectors from English Heritage, the listing branch of the DoE announced on 22 January that the Old Schools were listed on 22 January at Grade II "having been judged to be of special architectural or historic interest".

Oh dear: someone had blundered. On 27 January a second letter was issued from Marsham Street stating that the earlier "letters were sent out in error as the building has not in fact been listed." Why not? Because someone had remembered that "there is a certificate of immunity in respect of this building which precludes the secretary of state from considering it for listing until 9 September 1993 at the earliest." This had been applied for by the Conservative-controlled county council which, on 9 September 1988 was informed that the secretary of state obligingly intended not to list it.

Never mind which bureaucrat

made that decision back in 1988, or why, or that the DoE has egg on its face for such a bureaucratic blunder. What matters now is that, less than four years later, the county council cynically intends hurriedly to start demolishing the Old Schools on Good Friday while knowing perfectly well that English Heritage considers the buildings to be of listable quality. Not very moral or public-spirited behaviour — especially as English Heritage has written to the council pleading for a stay of execution — but the council claims it still intends to build a new library on the site.

If it does, why have no funds been allocated in the current budget for its design and construction? And why, before the certificate of immunity was acquired, did the county council seek and obtain a certificate of alternative use under section 17 of the Land Compensation Act of 1961 for "offices and/or retail"?

In other words, the county council could abandon any pretence at culture and simply sell the cleared site for a shopping centre or whatever looks

profitable. So much for its obligation under the Town and Country Planning Acts to protect and preserve the county's architectural and historic heritage.

IN EYE 786 I described the scandal of how St Francis's Gorton, Manchester, had been cynically abandoned by the Franciscans after both English Heritage and local authority money had been spent on repairing the magnificent Victorian church. Now, to add insult and injury to insult and injury, at a time when public money for worthy causes is in short supply, the minister for local government and inner cities, Robert Key, has awarded £811,000 to the developers, Zodeco Homes, to wreck the now redundant listed church by conversion into six floors of flats — despite the fact that English Heritage had advised that "this is very clearly a listed building consent application which should be refused" and had called for a public inquiry — advice ignored by the DoE.

So now, to quote the utterly disgusted Victorian Society, "by the time the development is complete, nearly £1 million of public money will have been spent on St Francis and its friary buildings... The final result will be the destruction of the historic building and the creation of some very expensive flats. This is an unjustifiable waste of public money." Quite so.

'Piloti'

TIME

Studs

(BSkyB)

CONNOISSEURS of the art of flyposting may recently have noticed a series of brightly coloured posters broadcasting what on first glance seems to be tragic news: that on BSkyB's exciting new spring series *Studs*, certain celebrities will not be making an appearance.

Terry Wogan is among those said to be not taking part, as are Mel Gibson and Phillip "Fluffy Slippers" Schofield. For most of us, this is all we know of *Studs*, and probably all we wish to know. If you didn't rent a satellite dish during the cricket world cup, the chances are you never will, and so news of a new series on Sky One is marginally less gripping than an episode of Lennie Bennett's daytime game show, *Lucky Ladders*.

Nevertheless *Studs*, a half-hour "people-show" imported from the US, is worthy of our notice, if only as an indication of the depths Sky is willing to plumb in order to attract viewers from the lowest evolutionary scales. To watch the show is to feel your brain shrink; after three or four episodes, you can hear it rattling around in your skull. Tests are not yet complete, but it's thought that after seeing an entire series, some viewers might actually wish to be contestants on the programme.

The format is simple enough. Two studs, chosen from local competitions across America, are paired with three "studettes" — girls with big hair, big smiles and low-cut dresses. Before the show, each

stud has been on a blind date with each studette, and the show is all about what happened on the date. Did he like her? Did she like him? What form of contraception did they use?

"Hi! Hi! Welcome! Welcome!" says the host, Mark DeCarlo, "I'm so geek for this show!" Tonight, he tells us, we have the biggest stud from Tampa, and the biggest stud from Boston, as well as "three of the most fabulous studettes we've ever had on the show" — Jennifer, a 23-year-old bookkeeper, Melissa, a 24-year-old child counsellor, and Katarina, a 21-year-old dancer. The audience, hooting, screaming and whistling, are clearly plugged into the mains. But what kind of guys are the three studettes looking for? "Over six foot, long hair, great personality," expounds Katarina. "Has to be intelligent," she adds, "'cause I can't stand someone who's not as smart or

when you look at a woman's body?" "Breasts." The air is heavy with testosterone.

Pleasantries aside, we get down to the actual game, such as it is. Each stud has to guess which studette has said which of three statements about him. "This guy is *Top Gun* gorgeous," reads one such statement. "His hair is as perfect as a putting green," says another. "Yikers, I'm dating a porcupine," says the third. The dead hand of the scriptwriter can be detected behind most of these statements: the studettes themselves are inarticulate to almost Bronze Age levels. As the game progresses, the questions and the comments attributed to the studettes get raunchier and raunchier, and the implication clearer: although nothing can ever be said overtly, the producers would like you to know that copious quantities of bodily fluid have been exchanged. And maybe they

"And now that's over let's start an in-depth look at the American elections..."



smarter than I am." "Hey! Great! Sounds good!" screams DeCarlo. Jennifer, by contrast, wants "a man who is very passionate for life" and has "very nice hands".

But where are the studs? Enter Tom from Tampa and Michael from Boston, to sit on the sofa and endure further screams and whistles from the audience. Both have the piggy eyes and tree trunk necks of the transcendently dim. "What can you tell about a woman when you hear her on the phone, Tom?" "Well, uh, that's kind of a dangerous thing, because, uh, you get psyched up and you get this picture in your head of the rocket scientist/*Playboy* bunny type." The blood vessels on the side of his head throb as his brain struggles to cope. "Michael, what do you see first

haven't. It doesn't really matter: the audience, by this time, is near to terminal psychosis, and Mark DeCarlo is so crazed by adrenalin that you think his head is going to explode.

And when the studs have finally battled through to the end, the winner gets to go out with one of the studettes for a second time — or have a brain transplant, the choice is his. *Studs* is a programme that yearns to be outrageous, but it's so staggeringly banal that the final effect is precisely the opposite: boredom. It's blandly shocking. Even for lovers of kitsch, it's surprisingly short of redeeming features. Terry Wogan can consider himself lucky, and so should anyone who has not bought a satellite dish.

'Old Couch Potato'

MEDIA NEWS

THE ANNOUNCEMENT by Virgin and TV-am that they are joining forces to bid for the new national pop station franchise has caused panic in the normally comatose corridors of Radio 1.

Staff at Egton House have been running around like passengers rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic. The network's senior manager, Bill Morris, was the first to leap overboard and paddle across to Broadcasting House and the comparative security of a job in David Hatch's office.

Several of the network's least dreadful DJs have already been sounded out by Virgin/TV-am, and are expected to abandon ship once the franchise is secure. Tragically, Simon Bates, the Wittgenstein of Radio 1, has been inexplicably overlooked by the poachers, has gone grey within a short space of time and is now making increasingly futile forays into Radio 4 in the vain hope that it will be able to accommodate his formidable intellect.

Demoralised staff are asking what has happened to their beloved captain, the diminutive Johnnie Beerling. Does he flinch from the fight? Does he crumble in the face of adversity? Apparently he does, visiting Radio 1 so rarely that senior staff have begun referring to him by a charming soubriquet — *The Remote Controller*.

THERE was much grief at the arithmetically troubling BAFTA awards when it was realised that Jonathan Ross was missing. Despite his Channel X production company actually winning an award (for Vic Reeves' *Big Night Out*) Ross himself had crossed the Atlantic a week earlier to prepare for another batch of programmes recorded in front of bemused Americans for the occasional Channel 4 viewer over here.

Sadly, this meant no chance of an encounter with BAFTA host Michael Aspel. No doubt they'd have enjoyed chatting about the expensive full page ads appearing in American media papers promoting *Aspel*, and illustrating with the aid of a graph the huge ratings gap between Aspel and Ross.

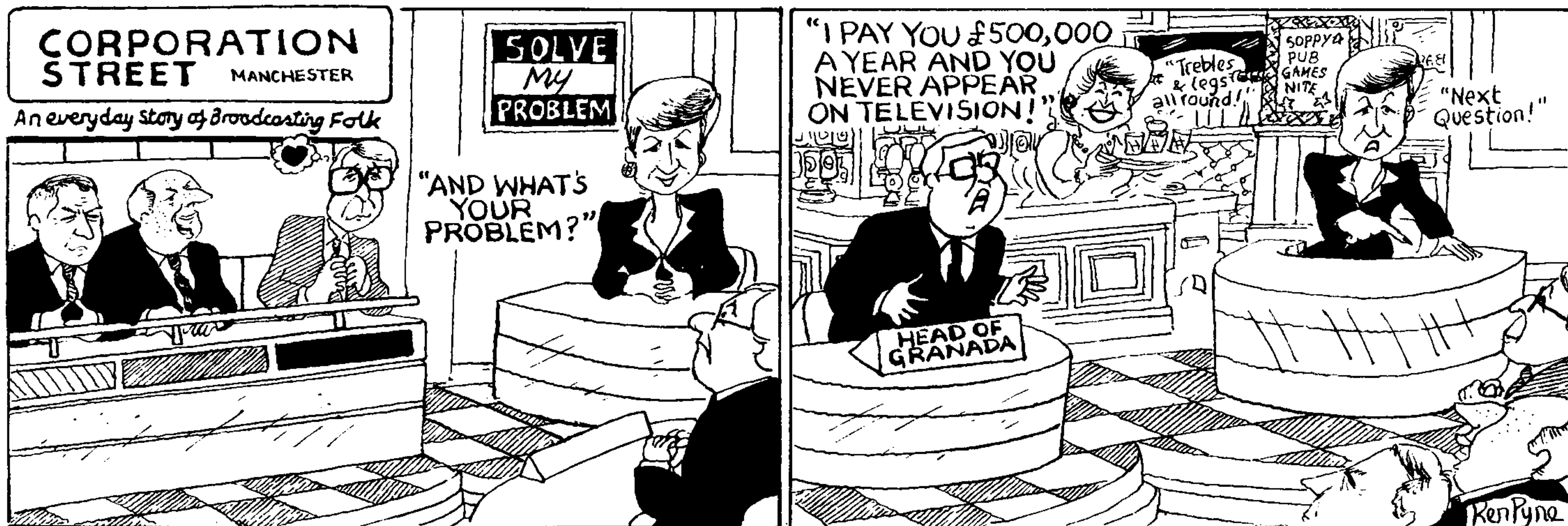
Channel X responded with a desperate ad of its own, claiming that Ross is The King of British Chat and "the UK's most popular TV personality".

Apparently "Jonathan stormed New York last fall" and he's now "descending on Tinseltown with his own unique blend of cheek, chat and charm".

Strangely, not a single Oscar winner, or nominee, turned up to see Ross go into descent, although Anthony Hopkins did manage to make appearances on both *Wogan* and *Aspel*. Woss was instead left with the sort of guests normally found chatting to daytime hosts like Miriam Stoppard or Nigel Dempster.

THE British film industry may have found an unlikely saviour in the well filled form of Chris Ryder, the *Daily Telegraph's* Ulster correspondent.

Ryder makes his debut as screenwriter on a BBC production called *Force of Duty*, currently filming in the province. This is apparently a work of fiction based on the troubles. Ryder's skill and creativity are not in doubt — his scoop for the *Sunday Times* about an imminent military coup against the Irish Republic's then leader Charles



Haughey being particularly fondly remembered by fellow hacks.

Sadly this unique insight into Irish life was not fully appreciated by *Times* editor Andrew Neill, and a story in which Ryder attempted to "prove" that the Birmingham Six were actually guilty led to a grovelling retraction by the paper and Ryder's departure to the more convivial environment at the *Torygraph*.

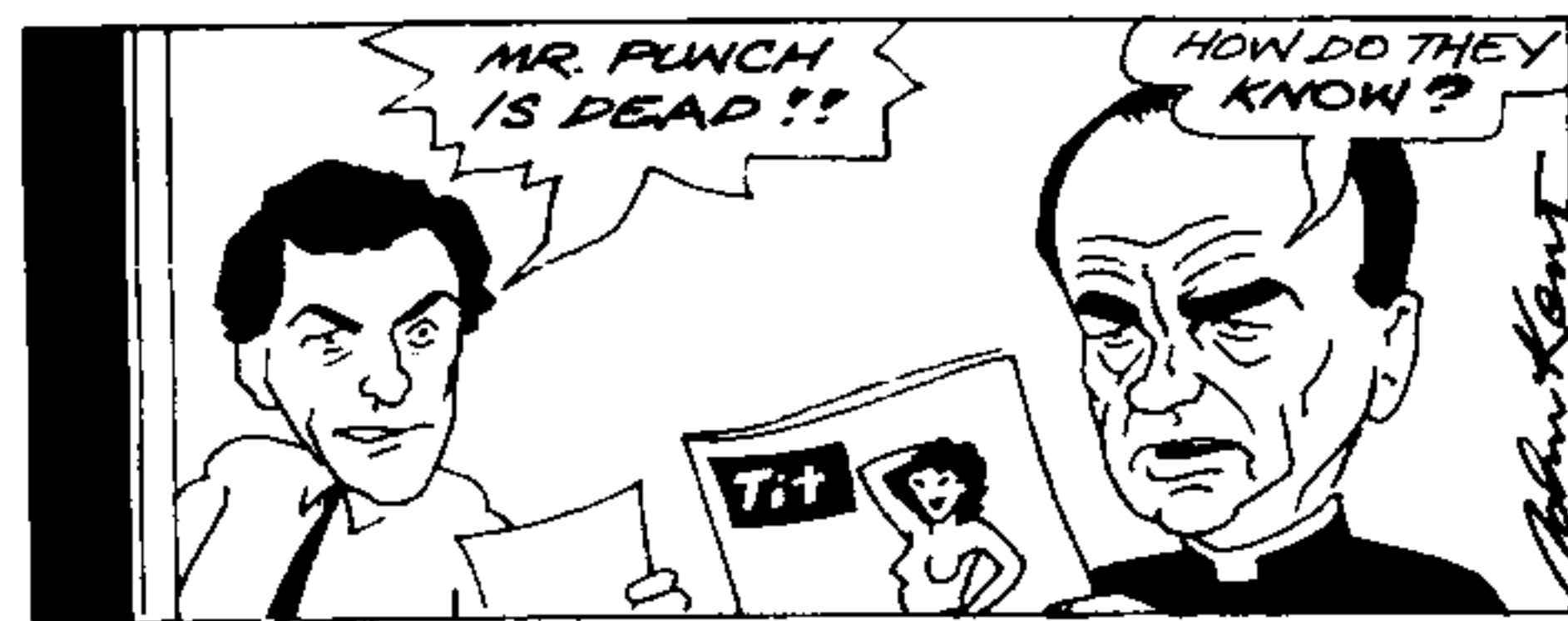
PRIVATE investigator, John Riley, has been arrested after two bags of household rubbish were stolen from the home of Roger Eglin, the managing editor of the *Sunday Times*. So said that paper on 29 March.

Quite who would want to steal anything from grey man Eglin's bins remains a mystery. What could he have to hide?

A clue is the fact that Eglin is something of an aeroplane fanatic, and when he was business news editor was one of the recipients of phone calls made by a British Airways mole called "Robert".

The mole has also been feeding Richard Branson with information, hence the bearded teenager's allegations of a dirty tricks campaign against his airline. The fact that quite the reverse is the case seems to have been overlooked, but wouldn't Branson find it just dandy if John Riley claimed that he was working for British Airways?

Investigative hacks might like to ask themselves precisely what role Branson played in the recent *This Week* television programme and, more importantly, what type of "appearance fees" were on offer to business hacks who were asked to appear on camera and slag off BA.



WHITE rastafarian entertainer Victor Lewis-Smith has been shocking readers of *The Mail on Sunday* with his trenchant views on radio comedy.

Radio Four's light entertainment department is not producing enough hard-hitting, alternative, on-the-edge material, according to Victor, only sad, safe, family panel games.

Of course this vitriol is totally unconnected with the fact that Victor's latest project, entitled *Ps & Qs*, has just been rejected by the self-same light entertainment department? *Ps & Qs* was in fact a family panel game of the kind Victor wishes to see curtailed: it involves teams of cuddly celebrities guessing how to behave correctly in the presence of the Duke of Norfolk, and other such alternative, hard-hitting ideas.

All is not lost for Victor's brainchild, however, as he has managed to find a new buyer. *Ps & Qs* will soon be seen on TV courtesy of Janet Street-Porter's tough, radical, no-holds-barred yooof department.

LBC'S INTREPID news hound Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill rang in from his carphone the other day with a hot news story and demanded a line feed to the news studio.

Neill: I'm standing on the A33 right now, just off the M4, and I can see a blocking fuselage of a plane that's gone down... There are police and ambulances all over the place... and it looks like a double-decker bus has been hit as well. I've got no details yet on how many... whether there have been casualties or not. There are 50 or 60 ambulances... [interruption] Uh... oh...

[whispering] And... um... I've just been told by the police that it's an exercise that's being mounted right now

Studio: Oh no!

Neill: Yeah.

Fortunately, the line feed was not live, otherwise Neill would have sounded a prize chump. As it is, a tape recording of the embarrassing exchange soon reached the *Eye*. At the end of the conversation, Neill sought to justify his impulsiveness.

Neill: I tell you — it's a hell of a scene!

Studio: Is it?

Neill: Yeah.

HACKWATCH No 19: Charles Moore



WHILE he was a schoolboy at Eton, Charles Moore wrote to inform his then girlfriend of some thrilling news: "I have bought a pair of baggy trousers!" Shortly afterwards he sent her a photograph of himself in a tweed jacket and smoking a pipe. He was 16 years old.

Moore is now 35 and is deputy editor of the *Daily Telegraph*. But at heart he remains the pompous young fogey who used to send his girlfriend interminable accounts of the meetings of the Eton College Debating Society. In spite of his grand status and salary, his columns in the *Telegraph* and *Spectator* still read like schoolboy essays by the smart-alec of the lower sixth.

Politically he was a diehard Thatcherite; but now that there is no chance of a comeback by his heroine, he has decided to bang the drum for John Major. The PM is unimpressed: after being interviewed by him for the *Telegraph*, Major told friends that Moore was the most supercilious twerp he'd ever met.

Prince Charles, by contrast, believes Moore is some kind of intellectual and invites him to Highgrove for "educational" chats from time to time. Here are a few morsels of the wisdom that so impresses the heir to the throne:

12 December: Moore hails the prime minister's "victory" at Maastricht. "Messrs Mitterrand and Kohl are beginning to look rather like yesterday's men, and Mr Major a little more like tomorrow's."

10 January: Today's essay seems to have been sub-contracted to the Rev J.C. Flannel. "Being in the Exchange Rate Mechanism resembles driving a car with only one gear. There will be times when the gear is the right one, exactly suited to the demands of the motorist. More often, however, it will be wrong. The one-gear drivers will be unable to slow down in a built-up area without stalling, or to accelerate on the motorway... cannot afford to leave it by the roadside and find another model... nor will the dealer that sold him the thing be inclined to change the gearbox..." Yes, yes, we get the picture.

17 January: Rebukes the Labour Party for its tax policy. "It is rather rude to the British voter," Moore opines prissily.

1 February: The *Independent on Sunday* has observed that it is "strange" for little Daniel

Moynihan, the 10-month-old son of a Filipino masseuse, to be entitled to a seat in the Lords. Not at all, says Moore: "It is surely a wonderful thing that the child of a Manila massage parlour can come in due time to make the laws of Britain. It would be extremely unlikely to happen under a democratic system." The editor of the *Sindie*, he adds, is a British citizen because his parents were British citizens. "This is just as odd, according to rigidly democratic ideas, as the fact that a Filipino masseuse can get her son into the House of Lords."

14 February: The election has not yet been called, but the result is already a foregone conclusion; it is "far too late" for Labour to adopt the policies it needs to win. "Voters find themselves in a strange situation in which the Conservatives, though roundly abused by their opponents, are, in essence, unchallenged. And that is how matters will remain."

14 March: The campaign has at last begun. "This election is simple for me," Lord Snooty writes. "I believe that one should vote out of self-interest, since that is the way the system is constructed, and anything else is much too complicated to calculate sensibly. Labour would impose a tax rate on me which would make me and my family markedly poorer. So I shall vote Conservative."

20 March: Rebukes the Labour Party. "It is a disgrace... this manifesto is the most unpatriotic in the party's history," Moore pontificates.

23 March: Attends a Tory candidates' rally at Westminster, where he falls into a swoon of delight at the sight of Mrs Thatcher, whose "sweetness and light were too good for this wicked world"

27 March: Moore tries to frighten any *Telegraph* readers who aren't good enough for this wicked world with his "Nightmare on Downing Street", a fanciful account of the first 100 days of a Kinnock government ("catastrophic... Benn and Livingstone... Winnie Mandela", etc, etc). This risible article inspires John Major's equally risible "Nightmare on Kinnock Street" speech a couple of days later.

3 April: Rebukes Neil Kinnock for his "impudence" in "looking like a Prime Minister" while he is still leader of the opposition. Contrasts it with the "dignity" of John Major on his soapbox.

5 April: The last weekend of the campaign, and Moore is getting desperate. "Why Britain must vote for Major" is the headline on his column. And why must we vote thus? Because young Master Baggy-Trousers finds the Labour Party "repellent". "I really strongly do not want to be ruled by such people," he whines. "I do want to be governed by Mr Major." Poor little diddums.

HAMBURGER SALESMAN'S NEWS

THE health of *Daily Mail* and *Mail on Sunday* diarist Nigel "Big Mac" Dempster is causing much concern at the Associated Newspapers HQ in Kensington.

Following his efforts to persuade *Mail* editor Sir David Fester that the story by two *Mail* reporters about the breakdown of the Duke and Duchess of York's marriage was wrong, he assured *Mail on Sunday* editor Stewart Steven that there was no truth in the daily paper's story. "I dine with these people and I know what's going on," he insisted. Within 24 hours, he was shown to be wildly out of touch.

The following Sunday, the *MoS* ran a story by Neil Mackwood speculating about what would now happen to Crane House, on the Atlantic coast of Barbados, a property that had been earmarked for the Porks. Pratt-Dumpster had already run a story some months before denying that they had anything to do with the property, but Mackwood had since found three independent sources to support the claim and the paper accordingly ran his report on its centre spread.

In the middle of the next week Pratt-Dumpster appeared in the *MoS*'s offices after a hearty lunch and, in the absence of Mackwood who was off duty, proceeded to lambast Adam Edwards, the rag's executive editor (features). He was clutching a memo about a proposed arrangement whereby Mackwood was going to assist Pratt-Dumpster on his daily column. That arrangement, declared the Pratt, was now indefinitely on hold. Edwards was

not inclined to take lectures from the prima donna and so pursued Pratt-Dumpster to his own office a floor below and harangued him in front of his staff, concluding with the exclamation: "Your career is hanging by a gossamer thread."

The next Monday, having demonstrated that his expertise regarding royal gossip was woefully deficient, Pratt-Dumpster decided to display his inside knowledge about showbusiness. In a lead item about the Oscars, due to be awarded in the United States that night, he told his readers to expect "shocks galore." Although *The Silence of the Lambs* was the hot favourite to sweep the awards, with nominations for Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor and Best Actress, Pratt-Dumpster had drawn on his high-level sources and now predicted that *Silence* would fail to collect in a single category. He suggested Nick Nolte for Best Actor (*The Prince of Tides*), either Susan Sarandon or Geena Davis for Best Actress (*Thelma and Louise*), and Barry Levinson (*Bugsy*) for Best Director. "Most amazing of all," wrote Pratt-Dumpster, "is that the Best Picture is likely to be *Beauty and the Beast*, the first animated film ever to get the nomination..."

None of Pratt-Dumpster's predictions proved correct and on Tuesday morning, once *The Silence of the Lambs* had swept the board, the subs at the *Mail* flooded him with computer messages asking whether he had any hot tips for the election.

In his Wednesday column, Pratt-Dumpster tried pathetically to save face, stating that "desperate last minute lobbying which I revealed on Monday by Hollywood powers to stop Anthony Hopkins becoming the third successive Briton to win the Best Actor Oscar was thankfully thwarted." Rubbish. His Monday items had "revealed" nothing about lobbying.

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

COMPASSION in World Farming, the kind folk who try to stop pointless cruelty to farm animals, have been equipping their members, neighbours and friends with a prompt card with which to quiz political canvassers on their attitudes to battery cages, live animal carriage, the treatment of veal calves, hen de-beaking and the tail-docking of pigs etc.

It seems the caring-sharing Lib-Dems and Labourites are doing far better than the Conservatives, who treat such questions either as a matter for ribaldry or as something best left to Jacques Delors to sort out.

Compassion in World Farming calculates that 400,000 people have been primed to challenge their candidates. Could it be that the torture of animals, so relished by John Gummer's whingeing farmers, has been responsible for the slide away from the Tories?

JUST IN time for Easter, the biggest commercially hatched eggs in Britain have emerged at Hangland Farm in Oxfordshire where 26 baby ostriches are scurrying around before being consigned to new ostrich farms in Ireland and Denmark.

Ostriches have to be licensed under the 1976 Dangerous Wild Animals Act and the European Commission is urging local authorities to oppose diversification into a new stock. The trouble for

the Brussels salary men is that the designers of the common agricultural policy never got round to having a harmonised policy on ostriches, so they would rather they were suppressed.

The United States Ostrich Association claims its huge member flocks are highly popular and profitable, which must make the EC ill at ease.

FARMING politics forges some odd alliances. The Rural Agricultural & Allied Workers Union, part of the T&G monolith, in Our Principles, Our Policies, Our Vision praises Sir James Goldsmith, the food magnate and financier, for his work on behalf of improved animal welfare and more extensive, low intensity and sustainable farming methods. Thus shall the lamb lay down by the lion...

THE GENETIC engineering of cows for extra milk from hormone implants is a topic that Old Muck has been chuntering on about for the last few decades. This seems to irritate Fedesa, the EC's animal drug lobby, which regards the opponents of hormone engorged udders as "contrary to progress".

While Fedesa is now promot-

ing PST (porcine somatotrophin) to create more prolific pigs, the commission is due to report in favour of hormonal animal husbandry in July 1993.

We have yet to see any EC document that contrasts the surpluses of milk and butter and other dairy produce with the commission's funding of twisted science that adds to the surpluses.

If we could just break the Milk Marketing Board and loosen up the hyper-preposterous CAP, milk and butter prices would tumble and cows could eat grass instead of hormone tablets.

AGSCENE reports a pleasant piece of complacency from food minister David "Do Sit Down And Have A Subsidy" Maclean.

The chemical canthaxanthin, used in poultry concentration camps to give artificial colour to egg yolks, is up before the EC's scientific committee on animal nutrition. It says the bogus colouring is dodgy, but the minister insists that "any effects on consumers from an intake of canthaxanthin would only occur over a long period of time and are not of an acute toxicological nature". So that's all right then.



Sporting Life

THE NEW spread betting company Sporting Index is taking an admirably cynical view of the flat racing season which is with us once again.

If asked, it is prepared to offer a spread of 15-17 for the number of days that champion jockey Pat Eddery will be banned for excessive use of the whip in 1992. This may not be the sort of Corinthian wager the old guard yearns for, but when the hacks keep going on about the champion's unrivalled strength in a finish they are of course really referring to his enthusiasm for the stick.

Punters who believe a kinder, gentler Eddery will be on display this summer will clearly want to sell this index while those who believe that Pat the whipper will be with us more forcefully than ever will want to buy. Either way a good time should be had by all — except the horses. Sporting Index clearly feels it has the inside track with this one as its chairman is none other than Compton Hellyer, senior steward at Warwick and a steward at Kempton, as well as being the manager of the Docklands Express syndicate.

Of course any jockey, flat or jumps, who transgresses the Jockey Club rules on whipping will find themselves in front of the club's disciplinary committee, which is currently chaired by Sir Piers Bengough. Piers is believed to be feeling a mite uneasy about his imminent encounter with Mrs Jenny Pitman over the tactics she employed with her Gold Cup "spoiler" Golden Freeze. If leaks attributed to the club's slippery PR man David Pipe are to be believed, then Portman Square will claim that it has been bounced into an inquiry against its better judgement.

"Old Piers has really been dropped into a spot of brown over this one," muttered one tweed-suit in the Ascot Authority stand on the royal heath on 28 March. According to the same insider, Old Piers has become something of a dab hand at dealing with unwelcome manure. It seems that last summer, whenever the Bengoughs decided to host an At Home in the grounds of their Herefordshire manor house, a local tenant farmer, whose lands adjoin their Canon Pyon estate, chose exactly that moment to take the lid off his slurry wagon.

The walls at Canon Pyon are tall and thick enough to keep out the prying eyes of oiks and riff-raff, but they were not able to repel the noxious aromas which floated over, causing acute distress to Mrs Piers and guests. The intrepid Sir Piers confronted the upstart farmer and in true ex-cavalryman fashion gave him a talking to. Whether Mrs Pitman can be dealt with so easily remains to be seen.

'Major Bonkers'



LUVVIES

Melvyn Bragg introduced the actor Alan Rickman, who read a touching poem about the Labour manifesto...

Sir Ian McKellen delved deep into Shakespeare to find a speech delivered by Sir Thomas More in defence of immigrants. Ben Elton cracked some weak political jokes, while Danny Abse delivered one of his own poems about a guest outstaying his welcome...

The actor Anthony Sher chose a South African poem about the shooting of a child, while the writer Alan Plater delivered one of his own poems *Three Ifs and a When* about three lost elections and their hope of not losing the next.

And then the star turn, hailed with gushing effusiveness by Sir Richard Attenborough. "It is with very true joy, and no small measure of measure of pride, that I ask you to welcome the next prime minister of the United Kingdom."

The Times, reporting on "Luvvies For Labour" election rally

Submitted by E. Strobes.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 for contributions.

HUNT NEWS



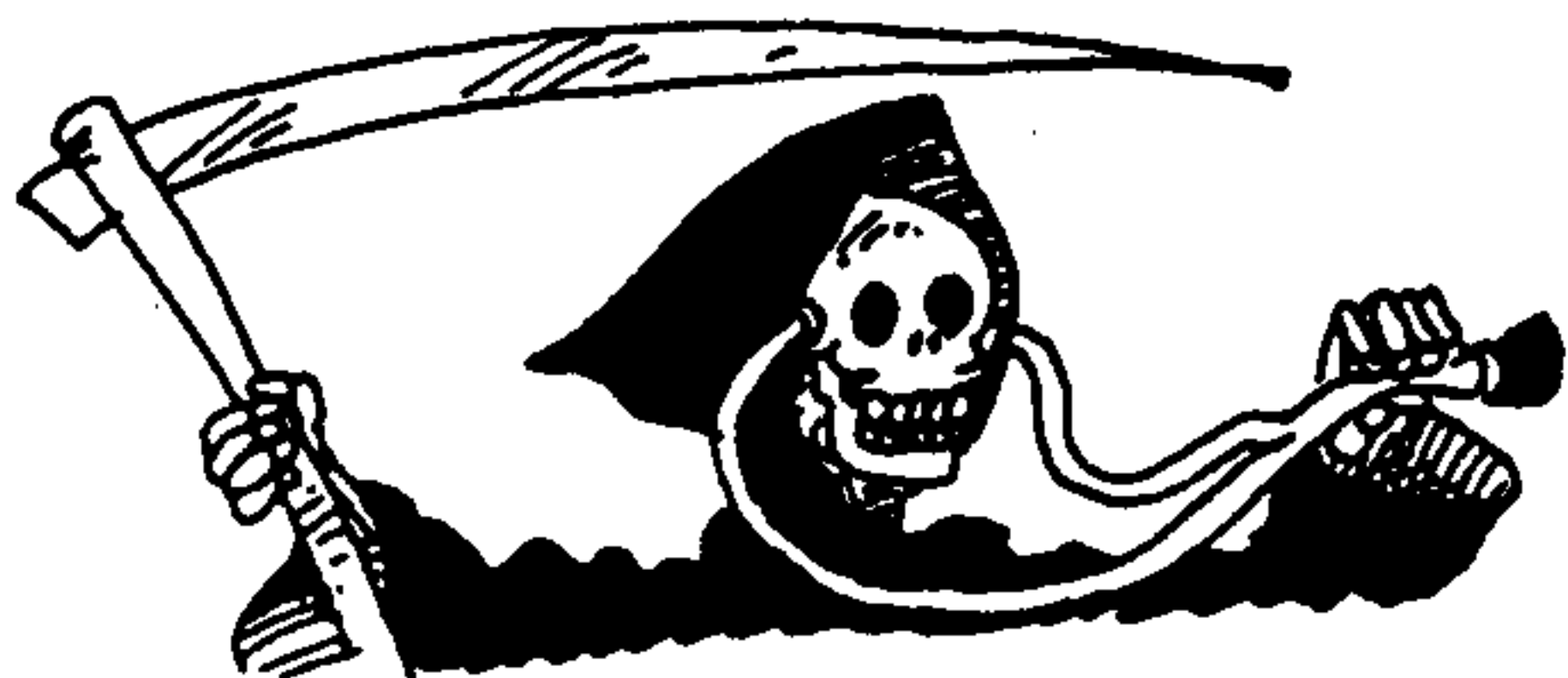
SIX FOLLOWERS of the Albrighton foxhunt in Staffordshire were arrested by Newport police last month after they attacked some saboteurs during a meet at Norbury Junction, throwing one man on to a barbed-wire fence and dragging a female saboteur around by her hair.

Only a few weeks before this, Gary Whelband, an Albrighton supporter, had been fined £200 for assaulting Neil McIvor, a Wolverhampton saboteur. McIvor suffered a perforated eardrum as a result of the assault.

Last December, Steve Purvis, a Tyneside hunt saboteur, required five stitches after a huntsman with the Tynedale foxhunt allegedly struck him in the face with the handle of his whip. Purvis has now been informed by Northumbria police that the Crown Prosecution Service has decided not to charge the huntsman in spite of the medical evidence and three statements from eyewitnesses.

In Nottinghamshire, hunt saboteur David Murphy was treated in hospital after being beaten about the head with sticks by followers of the notorious Quorn. The police refused to take complaints about this incident and no arrests of hunt followers were made, but instead six saboteurs were arrested for carrying whips and hunting horns.





DOING THE ROUNDS

● **NEWS HAS** recently reached the *Eye* of a woman patient who was admitted to **St Peter's (NHS) Hospital, Chertsey** before Christmas with her second ectopic pregnancy. Having already lost one fallopian tube and keen to have children, she was understandably anxious to preserve the other. At first she was told her there was no hope of salvage — that is, there was no hope of salvage until her BUPA company membership was revealed. A brand new laser then miraculously appeared, the ectopy was excised — and the tube saved!

● **AT KENT and Canterbury Hospital**, charging, fining, clamping and towing away are in full swing for anyone unfortunate enough to own a car (except managerial and administrative staff who have free permits). Surgeons are now rumoured to be nipping out "mid-op" to feed the meter.

Parking spaces are also at a premium at **Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust**, where much of the ground has been cordoned off for two years to allow the "Phase 2" development to take place. This includes a Sea-King helicopter pad (for major trauma) that is perilously close to the accident and emergency wing and so small a bee would have difficulty landing on it.

● **THE FOUR** orthopods in **Taunton** are to be rewarded for obliterating their waiting lists by the appointment of a fifth consultant. One is tempted to ask why, if there are no more waiting lists, do they need another consultant?

● **FORTH VALLEY Health Boards (FVHB)** has a catchy new slogan — *Caring for You* — which loosely translates to *Caring for the chairman's friends and family*. The chairman, Iris Isbister, recently had a new super-loo installed at health board HQ, replete with M&S royal blue loo-ware, for her use only. Other board members are exhorted to make "efficiency savings" to pay for such essentials. Perhaps it was while sitting on her porcelain throne that Mrs Isbister had the idea of a lottery to help out the most overworked and underpaid staff, announcing it to the world in the glossy *FVHB News*, each page of which boasts a picture of our Iris.

Further murkiness surrounds the two-year-old **King's Park** private hospital in **Stirling**, which boasts Mr Isbister and a Mr G. McKelvie among its consultants. The latter is also unit general manager of **Stirling Royal Infirmary (SRI)**, and has a conflict of interest in deciding whether to see private patients at King's Park for personal profit, or whether to generate income for FVHB by sending them to SRI. Some FVHB consultants are also rumoured to have a financial interest in the ownership of King's Park.

SRI — MP Michael Forsyth, Con — boasts a plush new surgical wing while the other FVHB acute hospital at **Falkirk** (Labour) has become decrepit, and the unfashionable **RSNH mental hospital** at **Larbert** nearly had the "trust-buck" passed onto it. The unelected FVHB cannot be questioned in public about such discrepancies in provision and is becoming increasingly secretive with board meetings held *in camera*, filtering decisions down to the local medical committees of unconsulted doctors. Curiously, the Isbisters are well loved Tory stalwarts and friends of the Scottish health minister, a certain M Forsyth (Con).

● **THE United Bristol Healthcare Trust (UBHT)** boasts the best equipped vascular laboratory in the country. Or at least it did. Carefully nurtured by senior surgeon Mr Horrocks, it was without equal. Unfortunately, Mr Horrocks decided to up sticks and head for the professorial pastures of the **Royal United Hospital, Bath**, taking much of the best equipment with him and claiming it was paid for by his private work and personal donations. UBHT begs to differ and is especially peeved that the stealthy professor smuggled equipment out in the dead of night. Locks have since been changed and a court case looms.

● **AN UNSEEMLY** spat has erupted between wet BMA chairman Dr Jeremy Lee-Potter and the rapier-witted London GP Laurence Buckman. "Tea and croissants with John Major is not constructive dialogue, it is grovelling," barked Buckman on the eve of the BMA conference last month. He also claimed that the chairman was "an accident waiting to happen" and proposed a return to "Darwinian principles of leader selection".

In the event, the conference went off without too much fuss. Dr Lee-Potter, soul-mate of tabloid harpie Linda, gave a coolly received speech in favour of the Government's reforms and then sat down.

● **IN Brazil**, meanwhile, ex-pat Briton Paul Woods, who works for a UK quango in the capital, Brasilia, has been having problems with the NHS back home in **Chester**.

He and his family can claim from public funds for medical bills while overseas, but when in the UK are entitled to NHS treatment. Mr Woods was surprised, therefore, to discover that he had been charged £38.50 for a prescription for Trosyl fungicidal nail paint for his toddler son, issued by a doctor at **Handbridge Medical Centre, Chester**, the day before he flew back to Brazil from home leave.

On attempting to claim a refund from **Cheshire FHSA**, he was told "there are no provisions under which the department can arrange for the reimbursement of the cost of medicine provided for your son". The Handbridge practice now has GP fundholders. Voters tempted to vote for Gyles Brandreth in the Tory marginal seat of **Chester** may well want to reflect on this.

● **CONCERN** is mounting in northern **Sussex** following cuts in the ambulance service in **East Grinstead**. Changes to the service and the withdrawal of one of two ambulances stationed in the town has meant seriously ill patients have had to wait more than 35 minutes while vehicles are brought in from **Horsham** more than 20 miles away across congested roads.

In one case the **Sussex** police helicopter airlifted a man to hospital because of the delay in getting an ambulance to the scene. In another a girl who severed her hand was taken to hospital in a squad car, and in a third case a woman lay injured in a road for more than 20 minutes waiting for the ambulance.

The problem is that the town, close to **Gatwick** airport, is on the borders of four counties, three health districts, two regional health authorities and two telephone exchanges. While the local ambulance station is in **West Sussex**, it deals with cases referred by telephone operators from across four county borders. On paper the **West Sussex** ambulance service says the town (pop: 10,000) does not justify more than one ambulance. When the sole **East Grinstead** crew is on a day off a crew is sent from **Haywards Heath**, more than 12 miles away.

Because the town's hospital has only a minor casualty unit, urgent cases have to be taken 15 miles or more to **Tunbridge Wells** in **Kent** or the new **Princess Royal Hospital** at **Haywards Heath**. As a one way journey can take up to 30 minutes the station is sometimes left empty for an hour or more.

But things could yet get worse. Doctors now fear the **South East Thames Regional Health Authority**, adhering to government guidelines of having one major accident centre per 300,000 head of population, may reduce the status of the accident and emergency centre at **Tunbridge Wells** in favour of newer facilities in **Maidstone**.

Meanwhile anyone contemplating having an accident in **East Grinstead** should avoid Thursdays when the crew has a day off.

M.D.



"You wait for hours and then six of them don't turn up at all"

Sally Deedes

IF YOU thought employing a solicitor to carry out an expensive local search on your behalf when buying a house meant his findings would be binding, you would be wrong. Nor is a local authority responsible, it seems, for giving out duff information.

Three years ago Kent reader David Parratt bought the Old Vicarage near **Maidstone**, the view over the surrounding countryside being one of the deciding factors in his purchase. Searches discovered that permission had once been granted for a bungalow on the neighbouring piece of land, but about a year later excavation for the foundations of the bungalow uncovered incomplete footings for a two-storey house.

It was then discovered that 20 years earlier the local borough council had granted a previous planning permission, which had not come to light in the search. Mr Parratt found his solicitor had done all that he could, and could thus not be blamed for the oversight.

The proposed new house means the Parratt's view will now be completely obscured, lowering the value of the house by around £20,000 to £30,000. **Maidstone** council admits that the original document had been overlooked, but would not accept responsibility for this and therefore would not pay compensation.

A Mr Jarvis wrote on behalf of the council saying that "when this matter was brought to my attention my reaction was one of incredulity that a house could be forgotten". He explained that permission had been granted for 23 houses of which 22 had been built and the foundations of the 23rd laid when an access problem arose. The foundations were eventually buried.

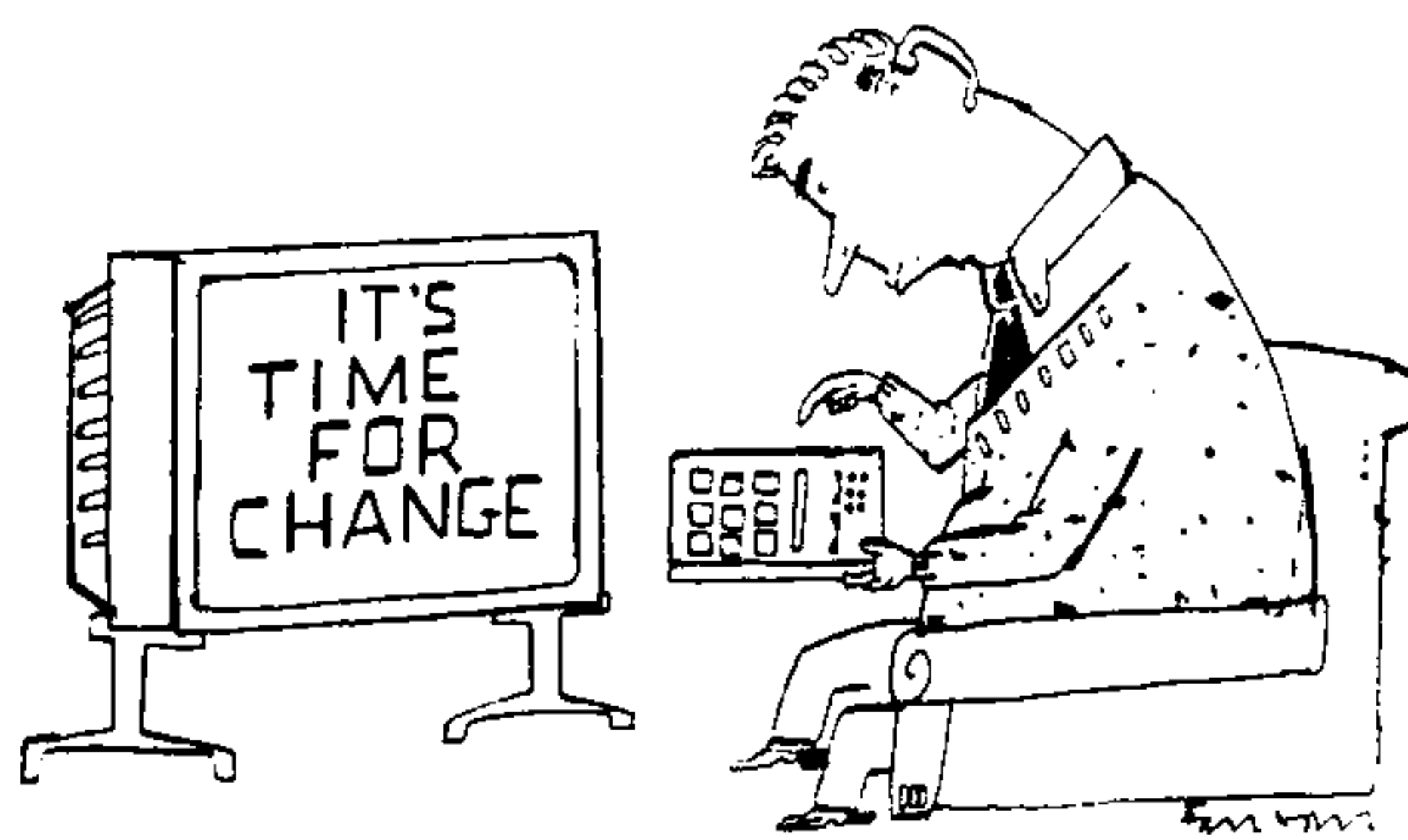
Not unreasonably, Mr Parratt feels badly treated. No one seems prepared to take responsibility for what is an obvious administrative cock-up. There seems little point in carrying out a local search if the goalposts can be moved at any time and no one is held responsible for the information given — or in this case, not given.

Mr Parratt complained to the ombudsman, who did not consider the case amounted to maladministration. A spokeswoman told me: "It is not unreasonable for the council to assume that planning permission had expired as there is no mechanism to check whether or not the building had been carried out. The builder had established his claim by building the foundations — the fact that they were covered up complicates the issue. It may seem very unfair, but within these parameters the ombudsman's findings can often appear unpalatable". Quite.

ILLITERACY NEWS

"**FIRSTLY**, I have put the desire to achieve higher standards of education and training at the top of everyone's agenda in the educational world and made people willing to contemplate changes if necessary in order to win teaching as a career back on a professional basis with a Review Body to advise on a proper level of pay, terms and conditions and a move away from collective bargaining and industrial relations so beloved by Labour and the N.U.T."

— Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke QC MP, writing concisely about his work as secretary of education state for to with but and from constituents in **Rushcliffe, Nottingham**.





ROTTEN BOROUGHES

ELECTION SPECIAL

AS MANY of Britain's pisspoor councillors tussle for a place in Big School and the chance to wreak havoc on a truly national scale, Lord Gnome offers voters an end of term report on the municipal mayhem the may — or may not — leave behind as they fulfil their parliamentary ambitions.

● In Bent South Bob Blackman, leader of London's looniest council, is well placed to retrieve some of the right-on anti-racist votes from sitting Labour MP Paul Boateng, the shadow treasury spokesman.

Though Blackperson is white and has led a Conservative administration in Bent for the last year, he has been propped up by the votes of two black African nationalist councillors. When Bent Tories consolidated their thin majority with further defections before Christmas, Blackperson said he would steer the borough ahead of Westminster and Wandsworth as flagship profit-making Tory authorities. His valiant efforts have been dashed by the refusal of the local peasantry to pay their poll tax and rent. Bent has some £100 million in unpaid debts.

Opposing Blackperson in Bent South is the tragic figure of Mike Harskin, a rare Liberal Democrat member of the council who was the first victim of the Tory-African nationalist regime's intolerance. He was evicted by police from the chamber last May after failing to address eccentric town hall power broker and Idi Amin-lover Nkechi Amalu-Johnson by her title "Madame Chair".

● Followers of the capital's councils will be pleased to note that deputy Hackney leader Tommy Sheppard, an aggressive Ulster-born ex-students' union careerist hack who has spent all his working life in committee rooms, is standing for Labour in the totally unwinnable seat of Bury St Edmunds.

Luckily there aren't too many council houses in rural Suffolk. If there were, tenants might have asked Tommy how much responsibility he would like to claim for the appalling chaos in Hackney's housing department, where Inspector Knacker is still investigating the infamous keys-for-sale racket whereby tenants by-pass huge waiting lists by paying backhanders.

● Further north in highly-marginal Bury South Labour's Hazel Blears, a solicitor, faces the electorate on the strength of how her council, Salford, has shaken off its traditional brutal image, demolished slum flats and turned its desolate waterside into a Lancastrian version of London's Docklands. Salford Quays is now complete with ugly — and quite unlettable — office blocks and broody displaced locals. Like London Docklands it

is miles from anywhere and has pisspoor transport access.

● Coventry is host to a gaggle of independent candidates, previously loyal Labour MPs but now discredited by the party machinery. In Coventry North East council finance chairman Bob Ainsworth fights for Labour against the now independent sitting MP John Hughes. A few miles away in Coventry South East, Ainsworth's mentor, Coventry council leader Jim Cunningham, is in the invidious position of wresting Labour's mantle from expelled Militant sympathiser Dave Nellist. Nellist's chances were dealt a body blow last week when *Militant* newspaper backed his candidacy and told its troops to go to work for him.

Both Ainsworth and Cunningham can take the credit for allowing Coventry's "showpiece" technical college to go £5 million into the red last year after a crazed plan to convince European students to forsake the Sorbonne or Oxbridge and study in the "historic" city ended in total failure. Amid tales of classic management chaos and unprecedented junketing, it was found that Coventry tech had even opened a branch in Athens and a costly full-time office in Brussels. They netted no income whatsoever.

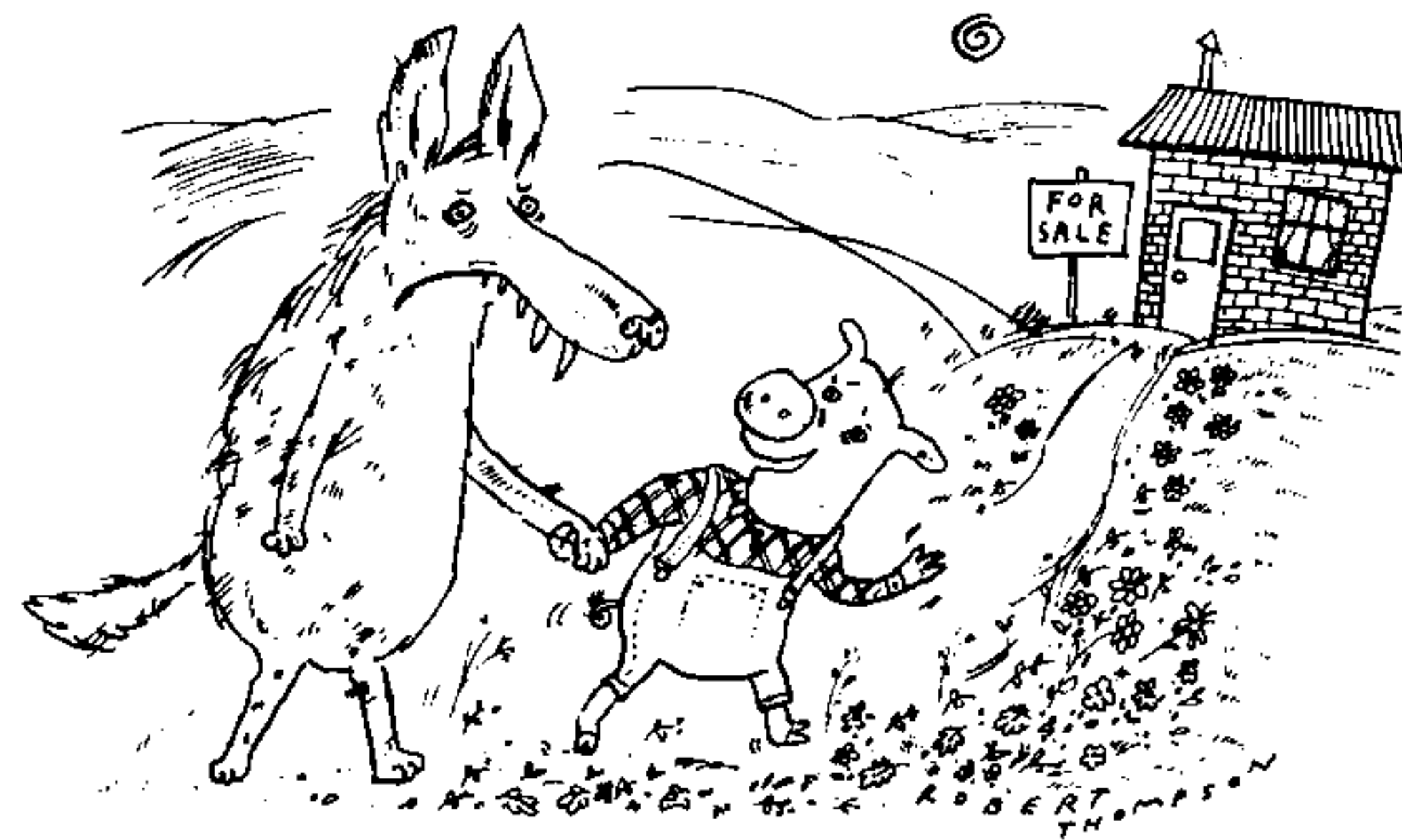
● The Liberal Democrats have no chance of capturing Denton and Reddish — just as well for the dole-queuing voters of this Greater Manchester seat who could hardly afford a Lib-Dem victory. The party's candidate, Dr Fred Ridley, is chair of neighbouring Stockport's finance committee, which rashly allowed more than £1 million of public money to be invested in the Bank of Credit and Commerce International — despite the warnings. Ridley does not mention this in his election literature.

● On Donkeyside, home of Yorkshire's mining industry (R.I.P.), politics is a macho affair. Strange, then, that the women in the Doncaster North seat had the temerity to put up former London loony leftie Frances Morrell to replace retiring member Mick Welsh. They also lobbied for a fair selection procedure in the local press.

Despite the national party's patronising tokenist-feminist posturing, councillors on Labour-controlled Donkeyside responded in true Yorkshire-Labour fashion by threatening to close the local rape crisis centre. Of course South Yorkshire seats belong to the Scargill-led NUM by gift of God and so redundant miner Kevin Hughes was chosen. Hughes, as chairman of Donkeyside social services, has a proud record of closing elderly care facilities. He is also rather handy with his hands. Two years ago he belted an unsuspecting fellow councillor, knocking him into a pensioner who received secondary damages. His reason? "He was stood between me and the fookin' door."

● Should Allen Brett, Labour's aspiring candidate in Littleborough and Saddleworth, fail to convince enough Tory voters to switch from Geoffrey Dickens by force of his political reasoning, he could always resort to more demonstrative tactics. In 1987 Brett "clashed" with a Liberal rival while canvassing and was fined £75 for assault, plus £700 in costs. Not a bad record for a chairman of the local police community liaison panel.

● Political intrigue in Sheffield has centred on the World Student Games ever since the city council wasted some £25 million to host the event last summer. Only a miracle, however, could prevent Clive Betts, council leader and the councillor most



"Hi there, say, how's your huffing and puffing? You see it's been on the market over two years and rather than hand back the keys..."

responsible for the Games' cock-ups, from becoming Labour MP for Sheffield Attercliffe.

The massive increase in Sheffield's poll tax for the next 50 years thanks to the Games fiasco will, after all, have little effect on the constituency's residents, many thousands of whom are either unemployed, unregistered or poll-tax dodging. If Betts does romp home, as expected, think what damage he could cause if rewarded with a seat on Labour's frontbench sports team!

● Coming from behind in two Potteries seats, Labour-held Newcastle-under-Lyme and Tory-held Staffordshire Moorlands, are two Liberal Democrat members of Labour-controlled Staffordshire county council who lifted the lid from the council's illegal incarceration of children in care under its despicable pin-down practices.

While Alan Thomas has an outside chance of an upset in Newcastle, Coun Jebb in the Moorlands seat, though starting off in third place, has the added incentive of challenging a Tory camp split over Europe offering two candidates and a violin-playing Labour candidate prone to losing his temper more quickly than Staffs loses jobs.

● Forty miles north in Stockport the Liberal Democrats are not so worthy. As well as robbing Stockportians of a seven-figure sum with their donation to BCCI (see Denton & Reddish) local Liberals appear to have a strange electoral death wish. In Cheadle Patsy Calton is only standing because the original Liberal candidate, Brian Leah, accidentally hanged himself while wearing women's clothing in a bizarre sexual ritual.

Anne Corris, meanwhile, chair of the council's leisure services department and now Lib Dem candidate for Stockport, seems to think the environment can best be protected by industrialising it. Last year she championed the building of a hydro-electric power station in the middle of luscious Etherow Country Park, one of Britain's great and obscure beauty spots. When the scheme was scrapped on cost grounds, Corris was visibly upset. Her department is now wasting a further £25 million of chargepayers' money building a non-Olympic swimming pool next to Stockport station, the centrepiece of the council's super-tacky Grand Central Station thugs' alleyway.

● Election day in Liverpool Broadgreen should be suitably farcical as a brace of Labour and Liberal candidates try to spoil eachothers' chances. Disowned Spartist Terry Fields dubs himself "Socialist Labour", but the word "socialist" is in such tiny letters few will notice. Meanwhile, Rosie "Roly Poly" Cooper is expected to come through the middle to snatch the seat for the Lib Dems.



HUSBAND



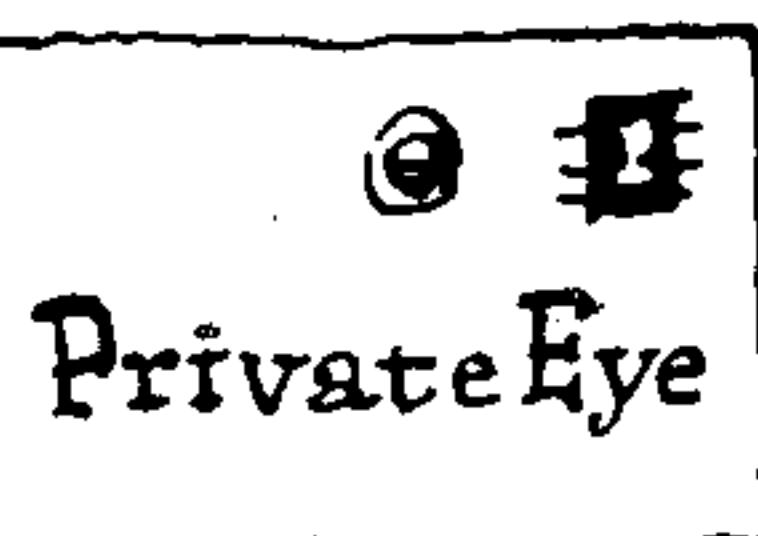
UN NEWS

BOUTROS Boutros Ghali was already becoming known as Boo Boo when he held his first press conference as UN secretary-general.

He lived up to his name by announcing that security resolution 242, on which the whole Middle East peace process has been based for 25 years, "for your information... is not a binding resolution". Only resolutions invoking Chapter VII of the UN charter, on threats to peace and security, were binding, he told stunned hacks.

The announcement was followed by two clarifications. The first was that he meant that it was not "enforceable", and the following day it was admitted that, yes, all decisions of the security council were binding — but some were more binding than others. (As the Libyans, Iraqis and Israelis, in their different ways, have discovered.)

Letters



Haque's back

Dear Private Liars,

Re: Private Liars' attack on myself, the BENTH organisation and the LCBG organisation in Private Lie's issue number 780.

I am writing to ask that you publish this letter — failure to do this will leave no reason for me and the LCBG to not go ahead with a writ for defamation against you. We have consulted lawyers today and this letter is a result of that consultation.

Your latest pack of lies bears enough signs in it of your motivation — that because I and colleagues are defending our members at the Stratford school, which defence work itself you cannot undermine, you have to dig for dirt and make myself and colleagues come across as in some way morally compromised. And this is a racist motivation, the precise sort which has reared its trendy head elsewhere in the "quality" press!

As for your new defamation with the participation of David Daykin... [THERE THEN FOLLOWS A SERIES OF EXTREMELY LIBELLOUS REMARKS ABOUT MR DAYKIN, WHICH FOR LEGAL REASONS IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR PRIVATE EYE TO REPRODUCE. HOWEVER, WE WOULD BE VERY HAPPY TO PASS THE REMAINDER OF THIS LETTER ON TO MR DAYKIN, SHOULD HE SO DESIRE.]

Yours,
M. HAQUE,

London Collective of Black Governors.

Foxy lady seeks a fair deal

Sir,

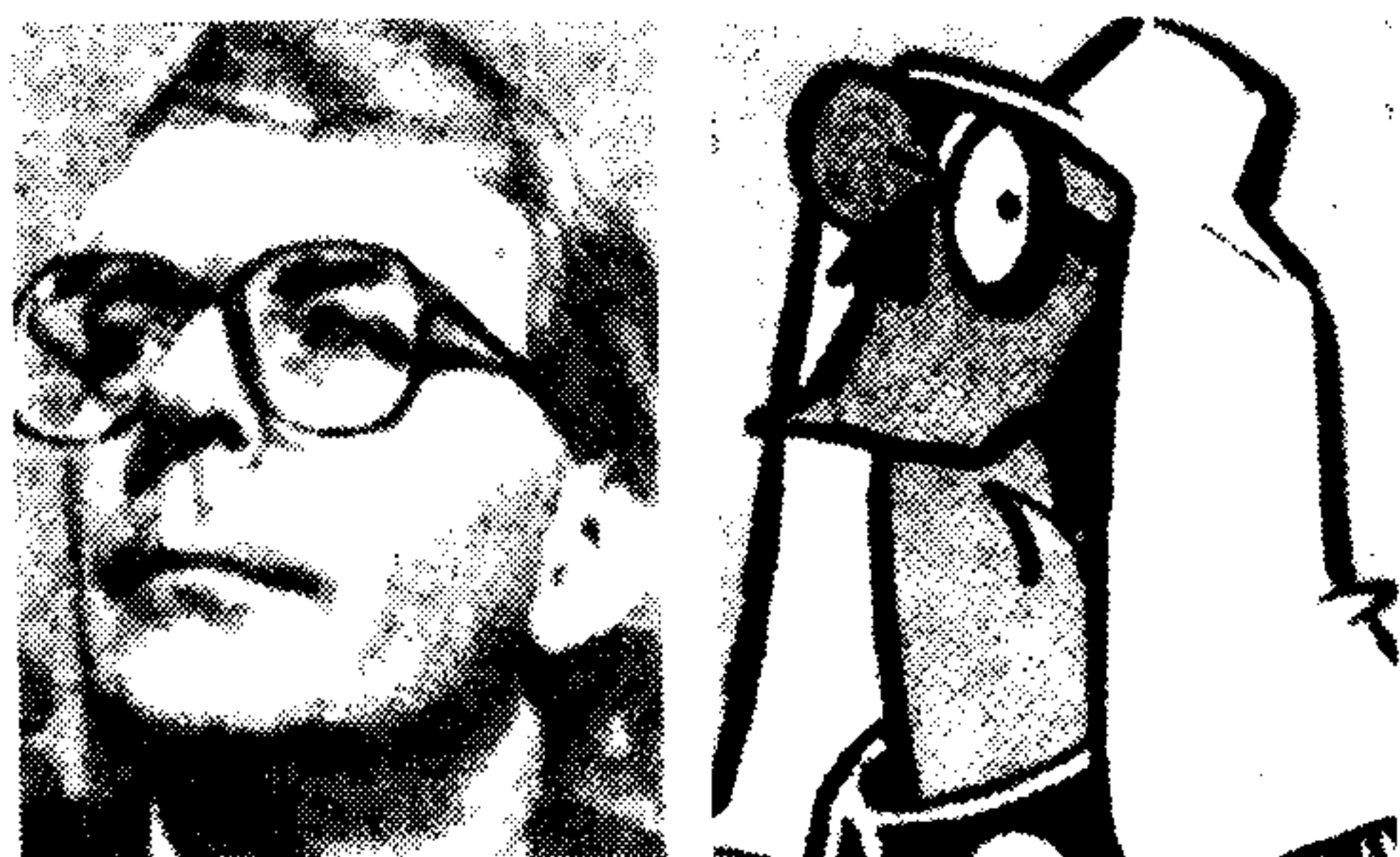
PRIVATE EYE's hypocrisy astounds me. You get your socks all sweaty over a few mangy, verminous foxes being dispatched relatively quickly and certainly cleanly. And yet you condone Ugandan affairs and thus all the attendant misery that their discovery causes to spouses and offspring. I feel so sorry for all the poor deceived wives behind the "happily married but sexually unsatisfied" men in your "Eye Love" column. I understand that even the radical thinking TIME OUT doesn't take this sort of advert.

But getting back to foxes, I see no end dead on the side of the road and undoubtedly there are a load more who drag themselves away badly injured to die a painful, slow death. Perhaps we should ban the motor car?

Yours truly,
BRIGID FAIRMAN,

Haslemere, Surrey.

Lookalike



Peep

Major

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the startling similarity between the Daily Star's "Beau Peep" and Premier John Major?

Which would you vote for?

A.B.C. ya.
STEVE PECK.

Framlingham, Suffolk.

Dross question

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the astonishing similarity between your article on Croatia (EYE 789), and the daily drivel being put out by the state-controlled Belgrade media.

If you don't stop publishing such one-sided dross, I shall immediately take up subscription to your now somewhat diseased organ in order to instantly cancel it.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN BLAGOVIC,

London WC1.

Ball-breaker

Sir,

C.S. Thirsk cites the ever present Nick Owen in Colemanballs of EYE 790 but fails to realise (as probably did old Nick) the truth in the statement. Any snooker aficionado will tell you that the maximum break is in fact 155; made possible by the award of a free ball following a suitable foul. Most schoolboys (funds allowing) should then be able to perform the necessary mathematics.

Yours faithfully
D.H. THOMAS,

St Annes on Sea, Lancashire.

Front cover front covered

Sir,

I see that, in common with the tabloids, the EYE complied with the wishes of M15 and dutifully cleared its front cover of any reference to the election campaign opting instead to highlight the forthcoming royal divorce.

Is there a mole in the print room? Will there be a single inquiry? I suppose that the Official Secrets Act 1989 means we will not be told.

Yours faithfully
PETER HOLMES,

nr. Saltash, Cornwall.

Ex libris

Sir,

Your piece about the British Library's problems misses a crucial point which is set to cause chaos. After the move to St Pancras the old catalogue, lovingly prepared over many decades, and beloved of scholars from around the world, will no longer be accessible to readers.

It is being replaced by a computerised catalogue. This may have some advantages but it should complement, not replace the old catalogue.

Not only are innumerable errors inseparable from an exercise of this type and scale, but computerised information is ephemeral. For example, the accessing procedure may be changed ("improved" is the usual word) and confusion introduced.

This irresponsible decision strikes at the heart of the library's function: the location and use of books. There will, we are told, be marvellous mechanisms for moving books around, but if they cannot in practice be conveniently located, how can they be used?

Yours,
ANTHONY HYMAN,

Hampstead NW3.

Fast one

Sir,

So Nirj Deva "could well be the first Asian to be elected as a Conservative MP", according to Slicker (EYE 790). Really? He'll have to move pretty fast to catch up with Macherjee Merwanjee Bhowmagree, who was elected as the Conservative MP for North-East Bethnal Green — in 1895.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS WALTER,

London N1.

O.B.N.

"Barbara," says the prime minister bounding up to me in greeting, "you're not wearing your glasses. Have you contact lenses on?" he asks as his hand twirls a ringlet that has wandered incautiously over one of my eyes. Our prime minister notices a lot more than one expects and he is very astute in the way he handles the press. "And you curled your hair," he adds.

BARBARA AMIEL
Sunday Times magazine

Submitted by C.A. Kennah.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Chris cross

Sir,

Although I was rather impressed by the picture you painted of me as an aggressive BBC executive raring to tell Peter Jay what class he belongs to and what class he can fly, it wasn't me at all. I left the Corporation five years ago.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER CAPRON,

London SW18.

● We meant Chris Cramer, the Beeb's Head of Newsgathering.

Economic with the proof

Sir,

I'm pleased to see that Sir Peter Jaybotham is an EYE reader. Assuming that he read over and over again of the EYE's suspicions of Robert Maxwell, perhaps he'd like to explain to the rest of us 1) How he was able to work so closely with Maxwell without realising that the fat man was indeed a world-class crook? Or 2) If he did realise that Maxwell was a w-c c why he didn't blow the whistle before pensioners and shareholders were wiped out? And 3) Why his Maxwell years do not wholly undermine his credibility as the BBC's "economics editor".

Yours sincerely
AUSTIN FRIARS
(genuine economist),

London E4.

Lookalike



B'Stard



Kinnock

Sir,

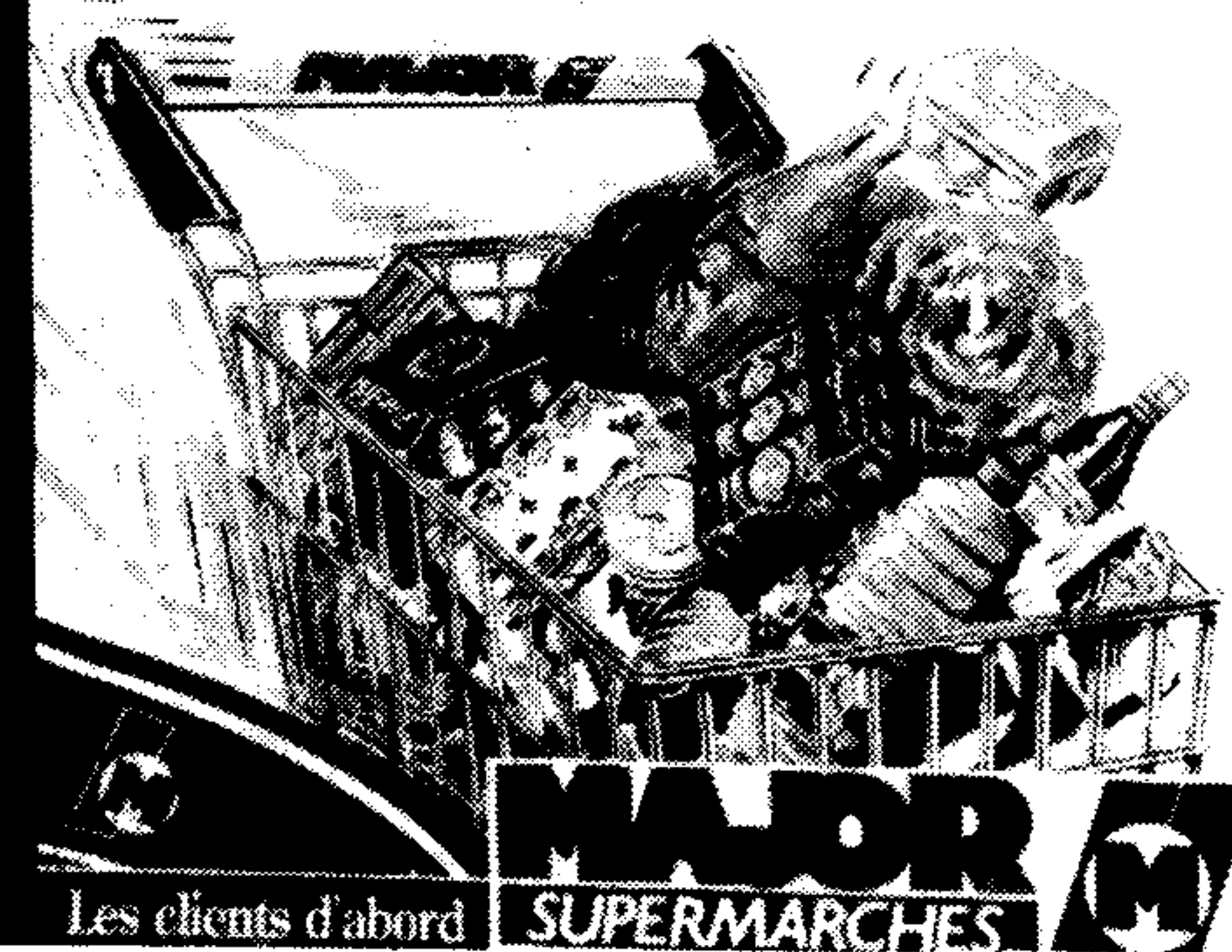
I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the amazing similarity between the leader of the opposition, Neil Kinnock, and that well-known extreme right wing Tory MP Mr Alan B'Stard (aka Rik Mayall). I wonder if by chance they are related? All monies to a National Health Service charity of your choice.

Yours faithfully,
A. DOCTOR.

Vous voulez

- Les prix
- Un accueil chaleureux
- Des produits frais de qualité, près de chez vous.

Choisissez MAJOR



Les clients d'abord **MAJOR** SUPERMARCHES

£10 paid for similar submissions. (SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)

Sir,

I enclose a letter sent to Ms Pamela Shields who — I believe — wrote to you recently about her entries for the 1991 Ian St James Awards.

We are sure you realise that some people who enter these awards — when they fail to win — feel in some way "hard done by" or "it's not what you know, but who you know". Thank goodness they are a tiny minority. Meanwhile, this small charity, sadly maligned in your magazine, continues, and in the past three years has awarded more than one hundred thousand pounds worth of prizes to previously unpublished authors, and will award another thirty-two thousand pounds this year.

Yours sincerely,
MERRIC DAVIDSON,

Trustee, The Ian St James Trust, London W5.

Making a happy joke very old

Sir,

Last week's literary review speaking of Keith Waterhouse's latest book UNSWEET CHARITY in it there is a joke "thank you very much for your support, I shall always wear it". This joke died 40 years ago and was first used in THE GOON SHOW.

Sincerely,
SPIKE MILLIGAN,

Bayswater, London.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Your subject is the football World Cup. It's not just football and it's not just the World Cup. It's the football World Cup."

HENRY KELLY, BBC1
(John Quinn)

"There is no way Ryan Giggs is another George Best. He is another Ryan Giggs."

DENIS LAW, Radio 4
(John Buckley)

"... and Tranmere Rovers are playing with a 5-man back four."

COMMENTATOR, Radio Merseyside
(Harry Smith)

"He hangs his head — looks to the sky..."

NIGEL STARMER-SMITH, BBC2
(David Powell)

Jimmy Hill: But you said it should have been a goal.

Terry Venables: No, I didn't. I said it should have been a goal.

Jimmy Hill: So you've changed your tune then.

BBC1
(Graham H. West)

Power failure

Sir,

Re: EYE 790 Murkyside,
The public house in question was the United Powers not the Union Powers as in your article.
Please print a correction or you will hear from my publicans Peter and Cathy Bibby (United Powers Hotel).

Yours faithfully,
JEFF WILLIAMS,

Liverpool L13.

Draft excluder

Sir,

Your correspondent (HP Sauce Election Special, 790) could have saved you the cost of a trip to the European Parliament. I obtained my copy of the wording which he quotes from the draft European Political Union Treaty by the following subtle stratagem:

1.) Going to the commission's office in Matthew Parker St., London SW1.

2.) Walking inside and asking for the "Conclusions of the Netherlands Presidency".

3.) In January.

The text was also substantially reproduced in the FINANCIAL TIMES on 12 December, 1991.

However, should you ever feel the need to send someone on an expenses-paid fact-finding mission to Strasbourg, I would be more than happy to offer you my services.

Yours faithfully,
LEO MAZUR,

London W6.



from Our Own Correspondent

WHILE working groups from the European Community prepare for the UN environment and development conference in Rio in June, the army here in Brazil is busy preparing to sabotage it.

The army has been secretly carving a huge new road through some of our lushest rainforest from the Atlantic to the border with Peru. The grandiose Calha Norte scheme of the former military dictatorship was planned as a defence against the six neighbouring countries, but it allows rapacious exploitation of minerals and everything else. Even our newest environmental agency, IBAMA, claimed it knew nothing of the project until the bulldozers were challenged by Survival International. Our embassy in London also claimed to be ignorant.

Ironically it was the former military government that proclaimed part of this region to be a protected area and passed a law naming it as the Neblina National Park covering more than two million hectares of rainforest. Now, the recent dismissal of our outspoken environment minister Jose Lutzenberger has worried environmentalists around the world who see President Fernando de Collor as giving way to the powerful military and mining lobby.

When Collor chose Lutzenberger two years ago he won widespread approval. But Lutzenberger was perhaps too honest. He compounded the theory of no money, no development by proclaiming at a recent preparatory meeting of the UN Earth Summit in New York that large loans were bad for third world countries as they were liable to be misused or misappropriated. (Brazil, where two ministers have just been sacked for corruption and other officials are under investigation, is a prime example.)

His speech horrified military and mining groups who have their eyes on the gold, diamonds, emeralds, niobium, cassiterite and other minerals that are embedded in the northern Amazon. (It is rumoured that a mining consortium is financing the road.) And Lutzenberger alienated his own environmental agency by accusing it of helping the loggers instead of the environmentalists.

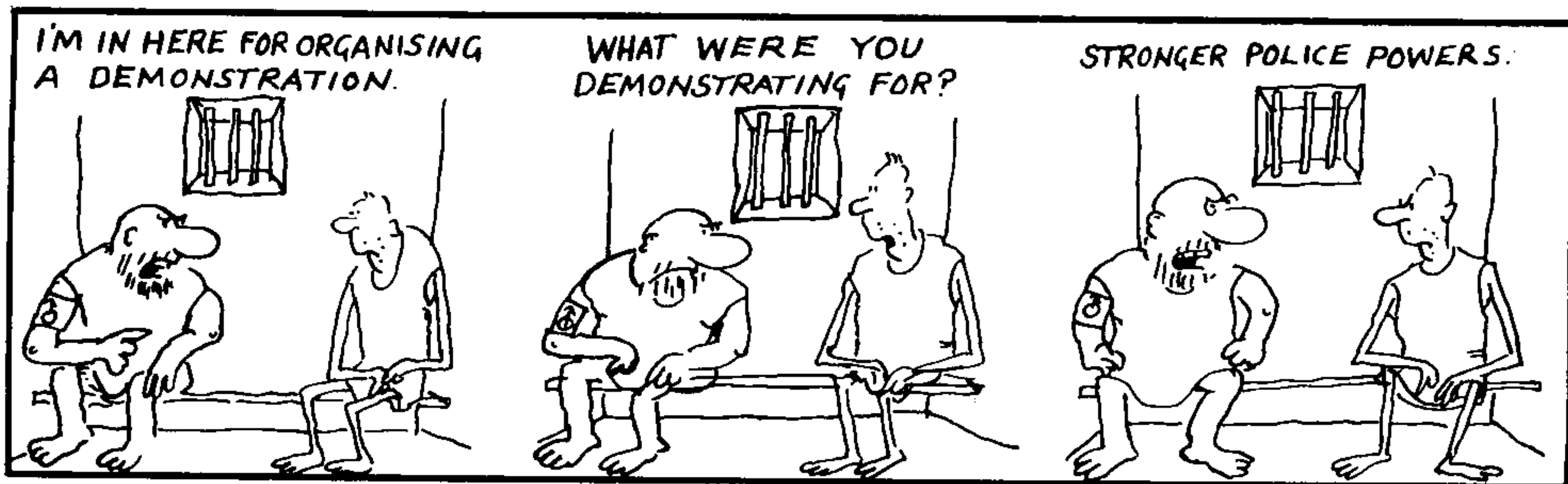
With only a sprinkling of true environmentalists to support him, his downfall was inevitable. His replacement, a nuclear scientist called Jose Goldenberg, has made his own policy clear, declaring: "The Brazilian government will not abdicate the right to development." His choice of Maria Teresa Jorge Padua as the new head of the environment agency is equally revealing. She has openly supported another huge road scheme — the BR364 highway, which runs through the western state of Acre to Peru and the Pacific.

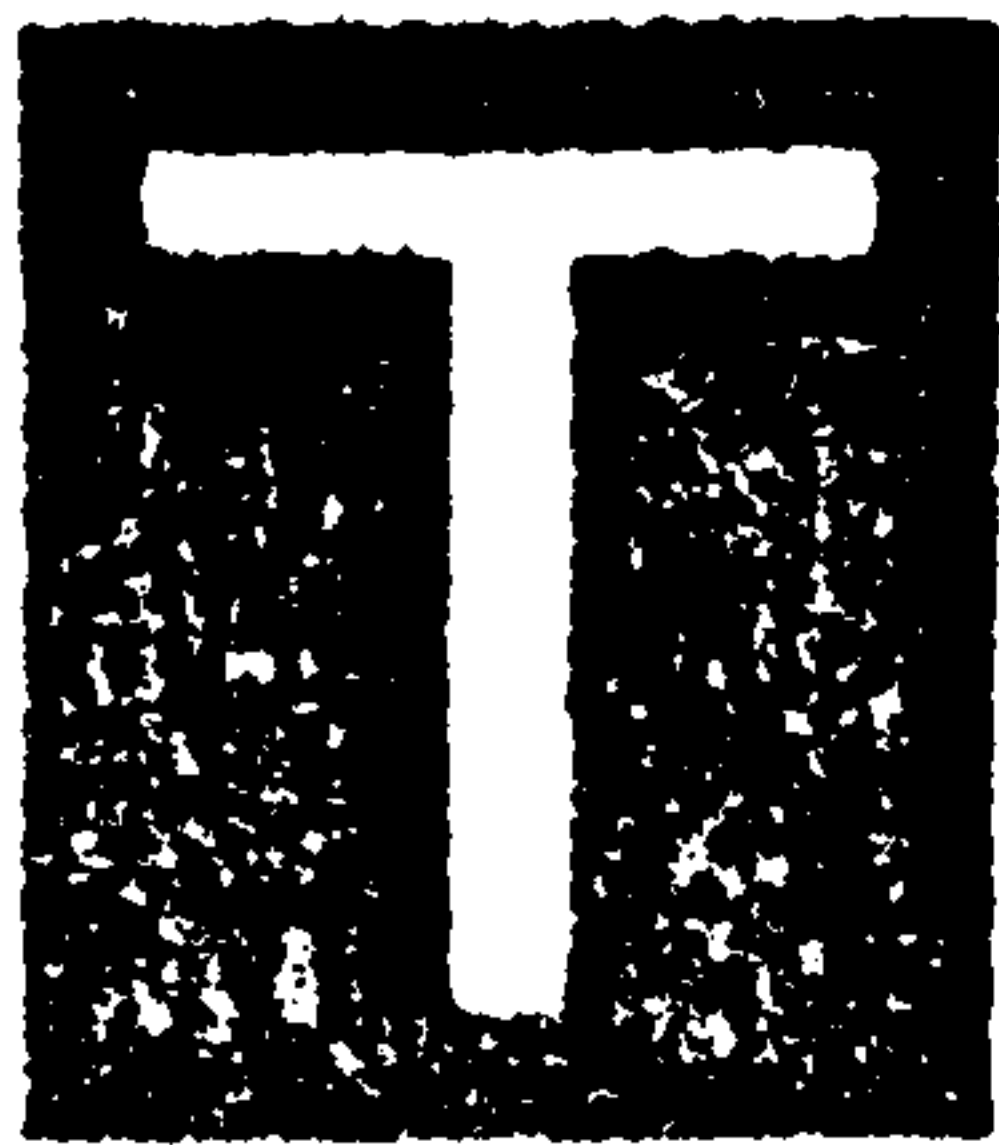
Although the military have tried to block attempts to demarcate Indian territory in the military zone, Collor has had to bow to national and international pressure to conform to the new Brazilian constitution which guarantees Indian people the right to occupy ancestral land. He has at last abandoned plans to shelve the demarcation of Indian Yanomami territory and officials have erected posts in territory neighbouring the military zone and closed off the Neblina National Park.

But the military are still politically powerful. Their zone includes land of at least 18 Indian tribal groups. Last year they tried to take over Yanomami territory by forcing their youths into national service. Now the government has forced them to recognise 9.4 million hectares of Yanomami territory, but the plan for the secret road through the rainforest continues and *garimpeiros*, the freelance jungle mineral seekers from Brazil and Venezuela, are even now invading Yanomami land. It remains to be seen whether the European Community can bring influence to bear to alter this strategy.

"What is at stake is nothing less than the future of the planet," Ken Collins, the EC environment chairman has declared, referring to the June conference. Before we save the planet, however, we Brazilians would like to save our own country.

HOM SAP BY DAVID AUSTIN





TRUE

DURING the case, Sheriff Noble heard that Mr Archibald Gillies, a jogger, annoyed by Mr Edward Campbell, a driver who was approaching him, dropped his tracksuit trousers and "mooned" Mr Campbell at just the moment when Mr Campbell's attention was attracted by a passing bird, so that Mr Campbell hit Mr Gillies "four-square on the bum" and "knocked him for six". Gillies was fined £50.

IN a statement made from the Anzanian People's Liberation Army headquarters, Mr Jonny Majozi of its Military Wing said:

"I am infuriated that our Party's slogan One Settler — One Bullet has been used by irresponsible people to hurt us. The slogan calls for the oppressed masses not to be wasteful of their resources. Such slogans galvanise the masses and maintain both theoretical and practical discipline. They are like poetry. Nobody is allowed to vulgarise them."

INTERVIEWED by a local journalist, Mr Stefan Kiszko said that throughout his 16 years of wrongful imprisonment it was his faith in British justice that kept him going.

"WE WERE delighted when Catherine Jordan, the Glyndebourne soprano, said she would sing at our Concert for Africa," said Miss Jane Good of Sheffield University, "and her appearance certainly helped to fill the hall. However, during her opening number, Ave Maria, the

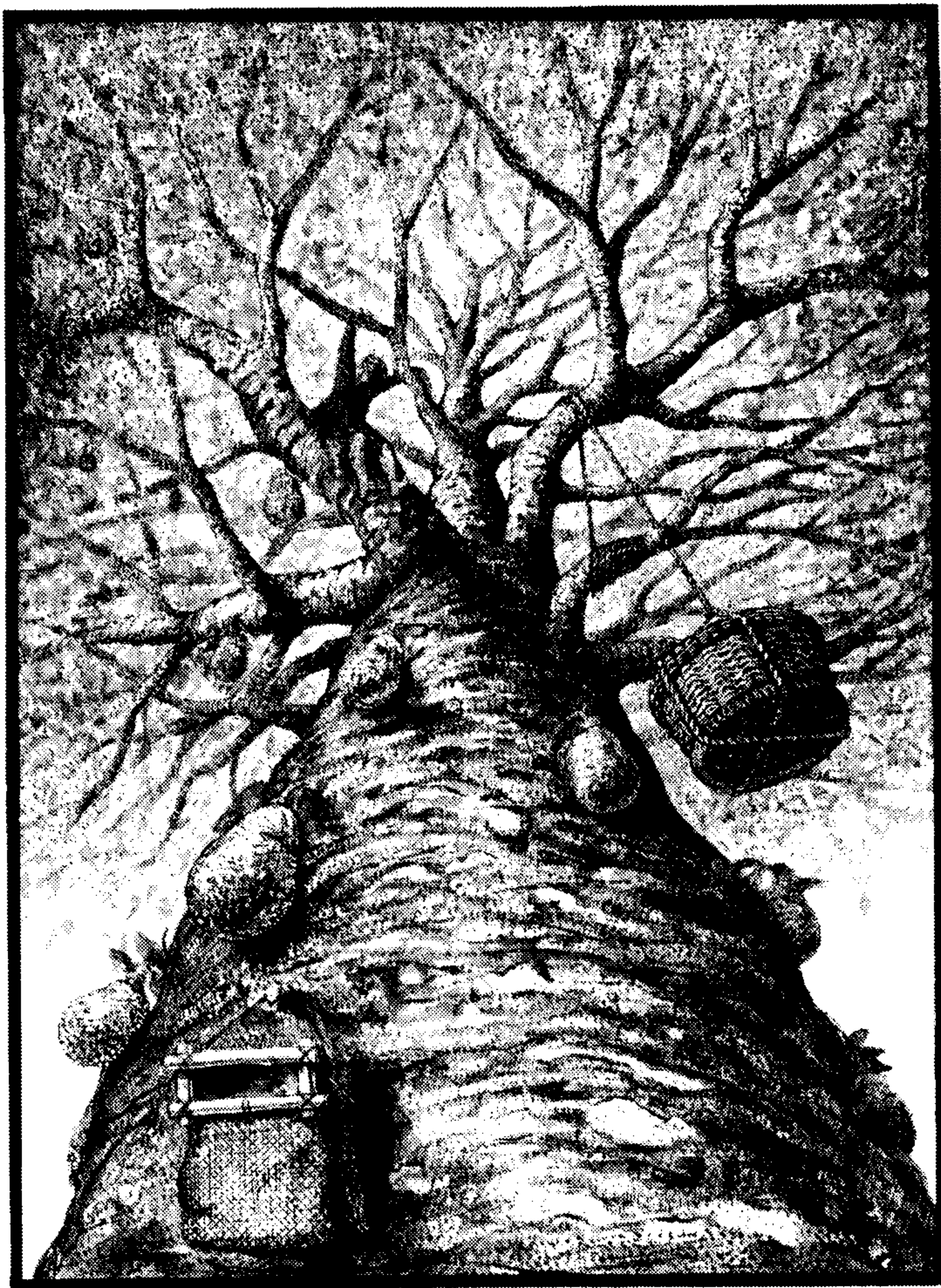
grand piano lid slipped down onto her arm and trapped it. Nevertheless, she waved assistance away and finished the song right through to tremendous applause."

"WE WERE surprised," said Mr Scott Ray of the Bangkok Rubber Trust, "when our Northern Representative, Mr Quek Boon Oo, arrived late in the Mt Rava Hotel coffee lounge.

"But hardly had he settled down when a completely naked woman, who turned out to be a

local prostitute called Miss Mansion, ran into the lounge, shouting: 'He hasn't paid me! He hasn't paid me!', whereupon Mr Boon Oo leapt to his feet and ran out of the hotel by the lawn-entrance, followed by Miss Mansion, who had, according to the hotel porter, been invited by Mr Oo to visit his room."

SPEAKING outside her mother's house, Mrs Theresa Tempo said: "Until he walked out of the house and climbed to the top of the great



Illuminated by BERT KITCHEN



STORIES

jak-tree, my husband was completely normal. But now he has been up the tree for five years and shows no sign of coming down, neither Jega, his second wife, nor any of our fourteen children have any idea what to do."

"This is a very difficult matter," said Mr Michael Gotit, head of the Mhweli Community in Plateau State. "Samson Tempo was a friend of mine. A businessman. Traditional healers, Christian priests and fundamental Muslims have called on him to come down, without fruitful result. During the night he visits the lower branches and hauls up the food his wives and children leave for him, and three years ago he accepted a raincoat for the winter season.

"But apart from that, nothing — and the federal government are not interested."

AGREEING that the Whitby Clipper Bus Service is to be axed, a spokesman for its operators, Tees and District Transport Services, said: "We decline to say when. It is Company policy not to let other people know what is happening."

INFORMATION: Aberdeen Press & Journal 8.2.92; Cape Times 11.2.92; Daily Mail 22.2.92; Sheffield Weekly Gazette 17.10.91; Straits Times 2.1.92; New Nigerian 15.2.92; Whitby Gazette 31.1.92.

MONITORS: Graham Stephen, Robert Reddick, David Brazil, Anon, Sandy Boyle.

"Are you sure you wouldn't like us to provide a partner?"



POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam Lord Spencer

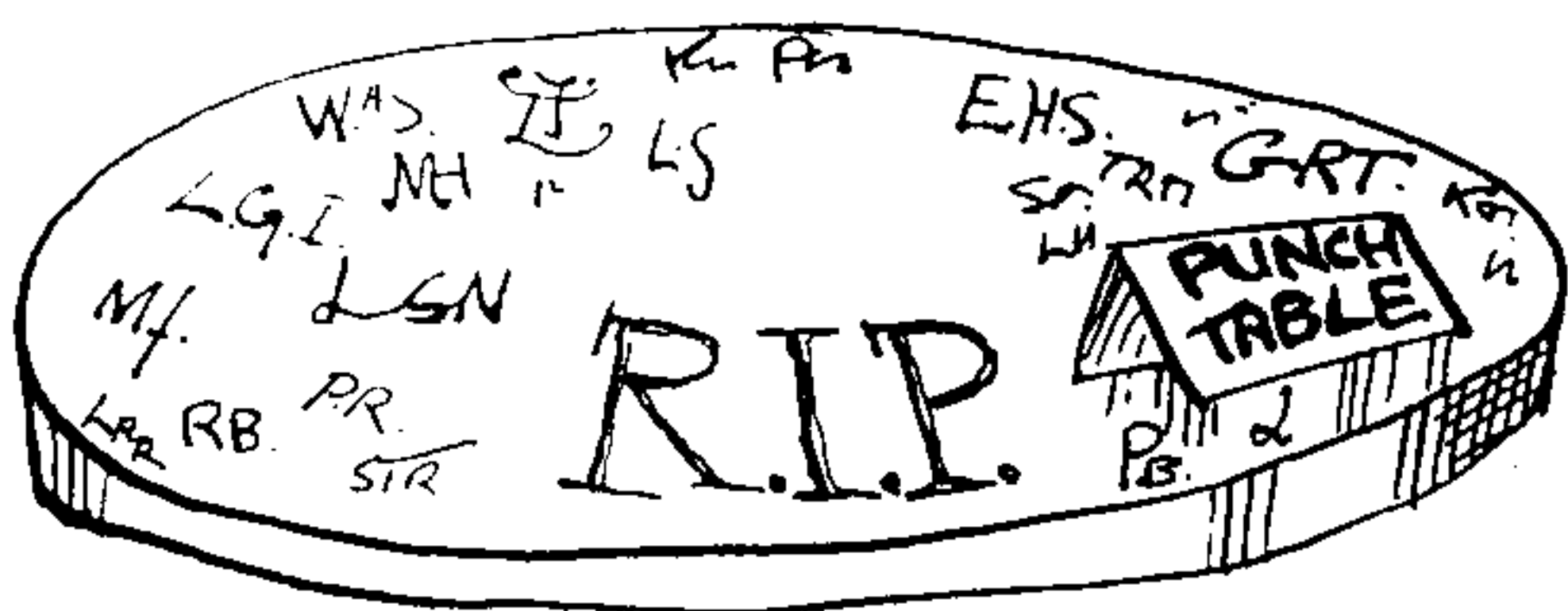
So. Farewell
Then
Lord Spencer.

And welcome
Lord Spencer.

Yes, that is
The way
The aristocracy
Works.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

How they are not related any more



That last Punch lunch menu in full

Kington Prawns à la Franglais
or

Katherine Whitebait
or

Freud Mushrooms
— * —

Corenation Chicken
Roast Bernard Partridge
Ronald Searleoin Steak
Scarfe's Liver
— * —

With
Newman Potatoes. Benny Green Salad, Brussel
Davies Sprouts and Hattersley Mangetouts
— * —

R.G.G. Price Pudding
Spotted Dickinson
— * —

From the Cheese Trolley

Pont l'Eveque
Alan Brie 'n' Biscuits
— * —

To Drink

Dry Sherry Morley
Non-Sparkling Waterhouse
David Taylor's Crusted Port

The Management regrets that joking will not be permitted.



NEW FAKE UNCOVERED

by Our Art Correspondent
Brian R. Sewell

THE ART world has been shocked by yet another revelation that a well-loved masterpiece, "The Man In The Silly Hat", is in fact a clever fraud.

Experts have examined the man hitherto believed to be the twentieth-century Lord Chancellor, Lord Havers, and have come to the conclusion that he was a complete forgery.

Rembrandt

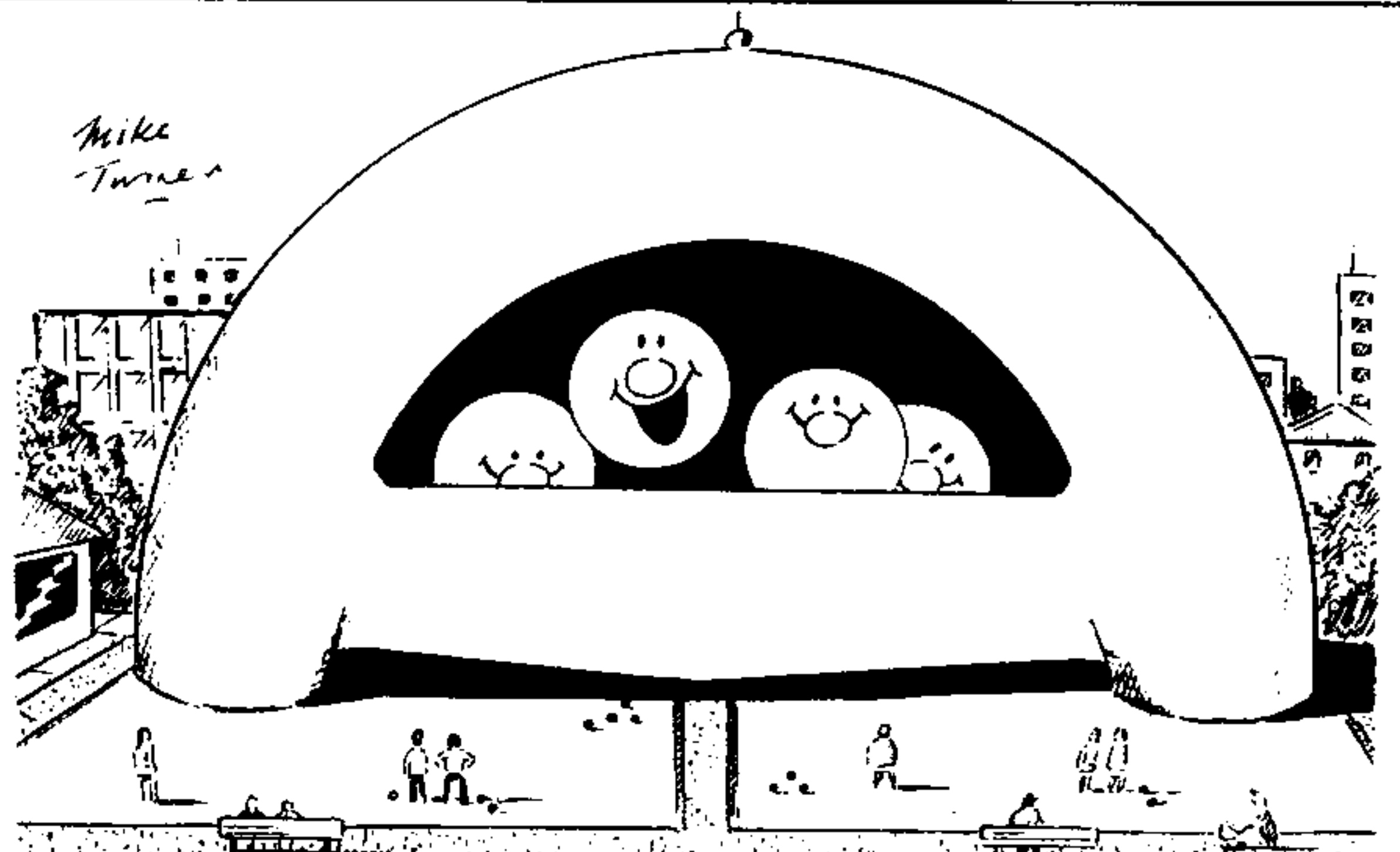
For many years Lord Havers, affectionately known as "The Man With The Silly Hat", was on display in various courts and clubs all over the country. He was much admired by legal aficionados and was once described by a leading critic as "having a rich warm patina, his face flushed a deep claret red, his flowing wig perfectly framing his imposing mien".

At its height, the "Man With The Silly Wig" was thought to be worth hundreds of thousands of pounds and was exhibited in the place of honour in the House of Lords on the Woolsack. Tourists queued to see what was thought to be one of the nation's finest treasures.

Old Mastard

But last week it was suddenly discovered that, all along, "The Man With The Enormous Fees" had been completely worthless.

As the same leading critic now put it: "It's an inferior, cheap, mediocre copy of no significance or value. You've only to look at the weak watery eyes and the greedy petulant expression to see that 'The Man With The Gold American Express Card' is thoroughly second-rate and should never have been given any recognition at all."



"...and that's why, Earthling scum, we're going to pulverise your miserable little planet into radioactive dust"

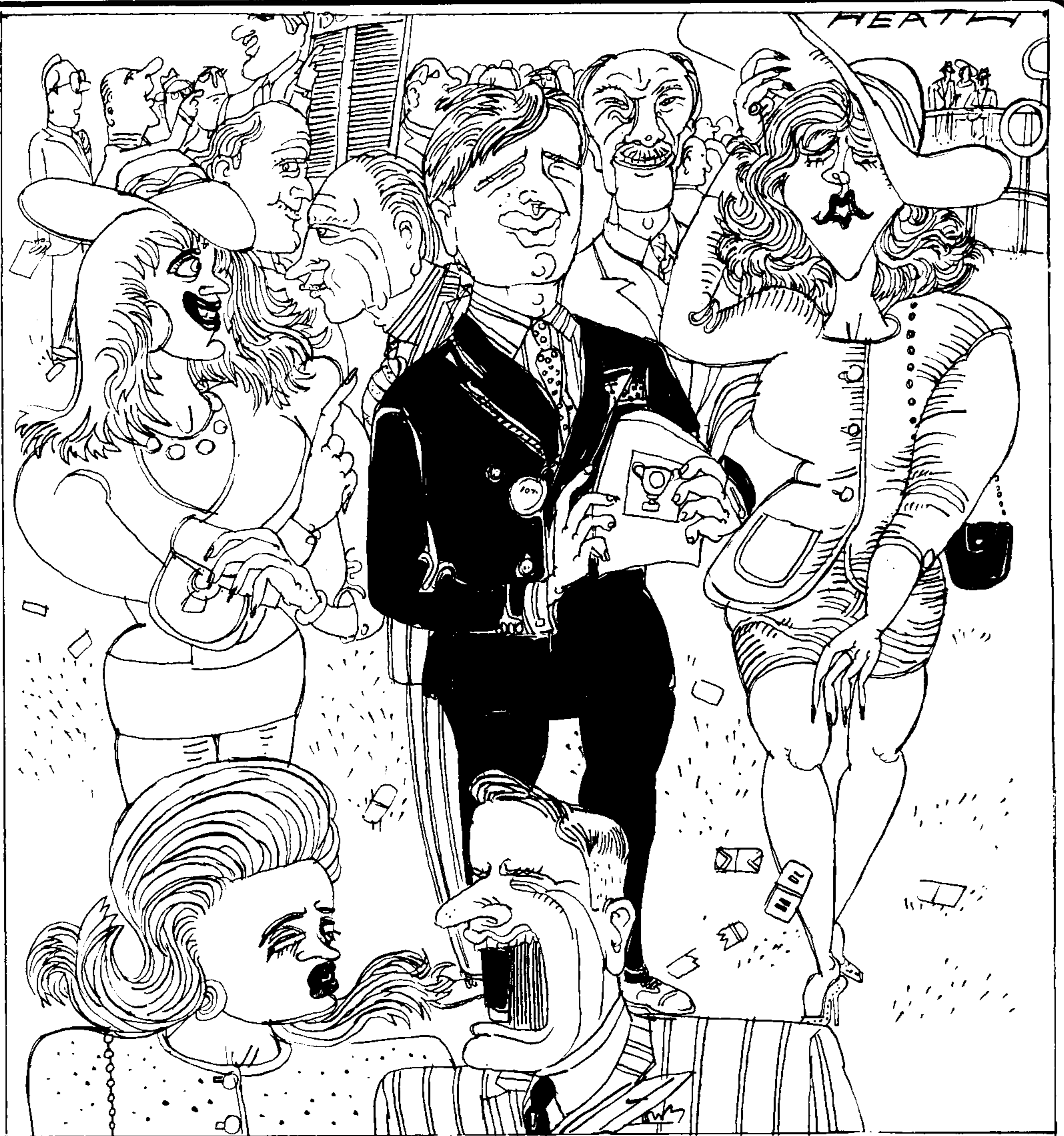
THE ALTERNATIVE VOICE

Paul Spart,
co-chair Neasden Media
Workers Against the Gulf War

Once again it is no coincidence that the current Tory Party misfortunes i.e. their poor standing in the polls and increasing lack of credibility amongst the electorate as a whole has been totally obscured by the so-called death of a prominent member of the Royal Family i.e. the late Earl Spencer which the Tory-owned mass-circulation newspapers press etc have immediately orchestrated on their front pages in order to cover up the real news i.e. that the post-Thatcherite Conservative autocracy is totally finished er... obviously this is the handiwork of MI5 and MI6 and the whole British Establishment who are organising major Royal events viz divorce death etcetera in order to prevent the real headlines of this election which prove conclusively that er... Labour has totally sold out and Kinnock is little more than a clothcap Thatcher poodle and er... (contd page 94)

Many MPs use Heath for sex, says gay group

Ham & High



Great Bores Of Today.

"... it's altogether a fairer system than the first past the post it works perfectly well in nearly every country in the world except here it can't be right that a quarter of the electorate vote for a party that only gets 10 seats that's hardly democratic is it? nor is the fact that the ruling party only got what was it? 42 per cent of the popular vote and they ended up in power for thirteen years it's a joke it's obvious what we need is the STV system meaning the Single Transportable Vote in which you nominate your first three choices so you've got the knowledge that if your first nomination fails to get a clear majority your second preference is taken into consideration against the average above a certain threshold obviously and therefore your third nomination is left only as a backup so you don't get a deadheat situation they've had it in Norway for years and there's never been a hung parliament to my knowledge it's a lot fairer it's just for some reason the man in the street doesn't understand it..."

Celeb

LIGGER



How they will be voting



Why I will be voting Labour

by Bertram Wooster

I'VE never been much of a political bird. So when it comes to tootling down to the polling both to put one's X on the old blotting paper, yours truly is usually found heading off with a hamper in the opposite direction.

However, of late, my man Jeeves has become curiously one-track on the crying need, as he puts it, to give this Kinnock cove a crack at being top banana. According to Jeeves, we members of the well-heeled fraternity have had it plushy for far too long, and it is time to plunge our jolly old hands into the washbucket and shell out a thickish wad of the folding stuff to help our under-privileged brethren.

"But dash it all, Jeeves," I said to him. "There's not much incentive for a chap to work if he has to hand over every hard-earned penny to the unwashed."

"But, sir," he retorted. "It does have to be admitted, with the greatest respect, sir, that you yourself do not actually, in the accepted sense of the term, work."

"By jove, Jeeves, you're absolutely right. How was it that Latin johnny of yours put it?"

"'Rem acu tetigisti', I be-

lieve, sir, is the expression you are endeavouring to recall."

I was so bowled over by the full force of his logic that I am fully resolved, come April 10th, to bung my vote in the direction of our local Socialist candidate, Comrade Sid Stoad.

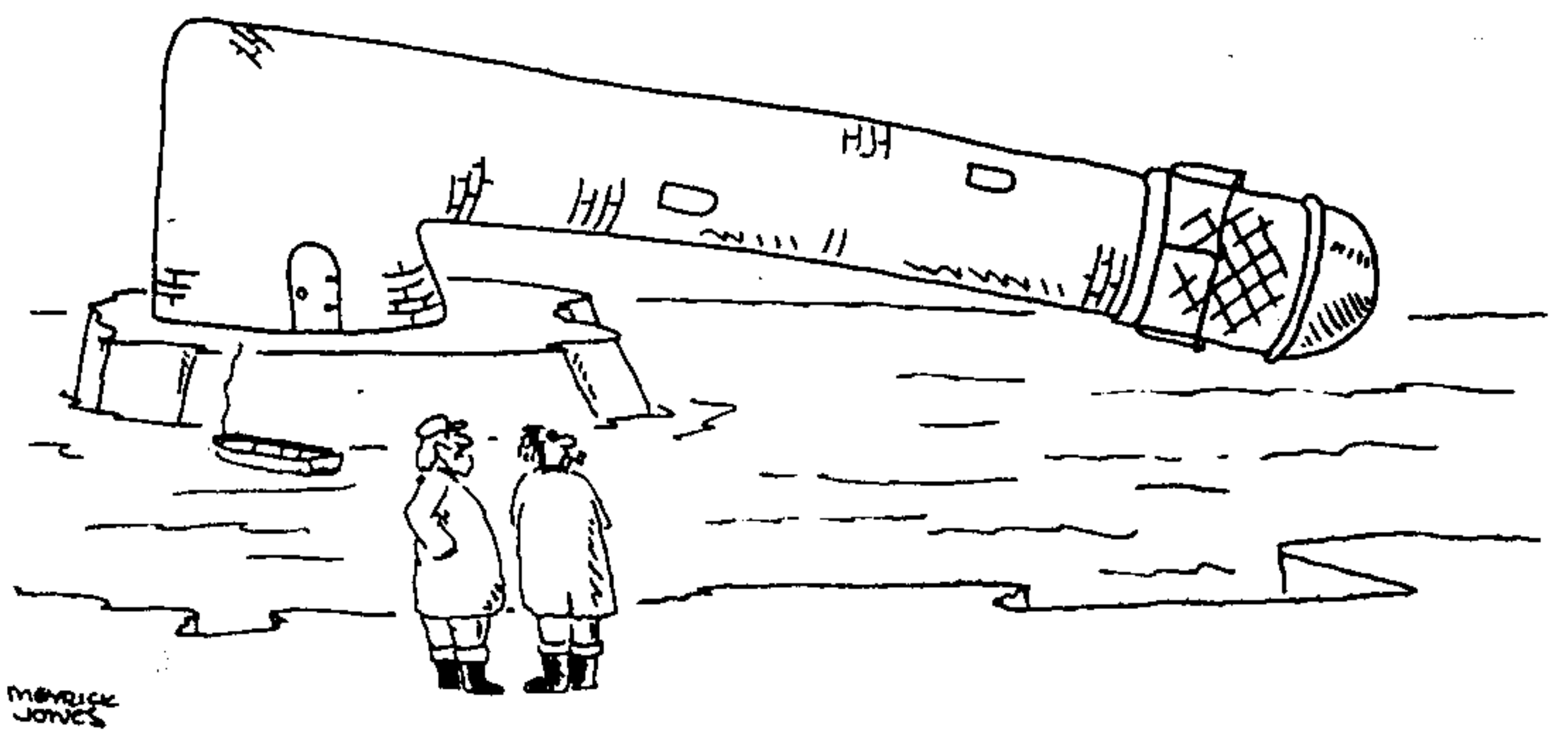
© Stephen Fry, *Daily Telegraph*



Why I will be voting Labour

by Margaret Thatcher

MY decision to vote Labour at this election dates back to a day in November 1990. It was then that I realised in a blinding flash that the Conservative Party was completely finished as an effective political force. They had turned their back on everything they had once believed in — i.e. myself. Bastards! They deserve everything that's coming to them, particularly that slimy little creep in glasses who I always warned would be a disaster. Vote Labour. Get rid of all of them and bring back me.



"Apparently the architect was a feminist"

In The Courts

The Case of Jason P. Dreamcoat vs *The Fuck Magazine*

The case continued today before Mr Justice Cocklecarrot. Appearing for Mr Dreamcoat, Sir Charles Greyman QC said that his client was one of the most distinguished actors of his generation, known throughout the world for his portrayal of Wayne Billabong in the Australian soap *The Cobbers*.

COCKLECARROT: What is an soap?

GREYMAN: M'lud, it is a type of popular entertainment on the televisual device with regular episodes repeated throughout the week.

COCKLECARROT: Thank you, Mr Greyman. Pray continue.

GREYMAN: More recently my client Mr Dreamcoat has played the leading role in one of Mr Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical masterpieces, *Jason And The Golden Fleecing The Public*.

COCKLECARROT: Who is Andrew Lloyd Webber?

(Laughter)

GREYMAN: Ladies and gentlemen and gays on the jury should there so be, I draw your attention now to bumble bee.

COCKLECARROT: The word is 'bundle', is it not?

(More laughter)

GREYMAN: As Your Lordship pleases.

COCKLECARROT: It pleases me a great deal.

(Paroxysms of laughter from whole court)

GREYMAN: Be so good as to examine the issue of *The Fuck* magazine, number 94 I believe, in which my client is portrayed in an T-

shirt bearing the slogan VOTE CONSERVATIVE. We submit that there can be no greater libel to any man's reputation than this disgraceful smear.

(Sir Hartley Redface, representing *The Fuck*, then began his cross-examination)

REDFACE: I put it to you, Mr Showboat, that you are not as other men.

SHOWBOAT: I resent that deeply. I have nothing against the Gay Community and indeed I have the highest respect for their lifestyle. However, I won't be called a filthy old queen by anyone. Do I make myself clear?

REDFACE: Do you deny voting Conservative?

SHOWTRIAL: What I do in the privacy of my own voting booth is no concern of anyone else's.

COCKLECOTTAGE: Is your hair naturally that yellow shade, young man?

SHOWDOWN: Not entirely, Your Honour. I use lemon juice, which gives it a lovely blond tint.

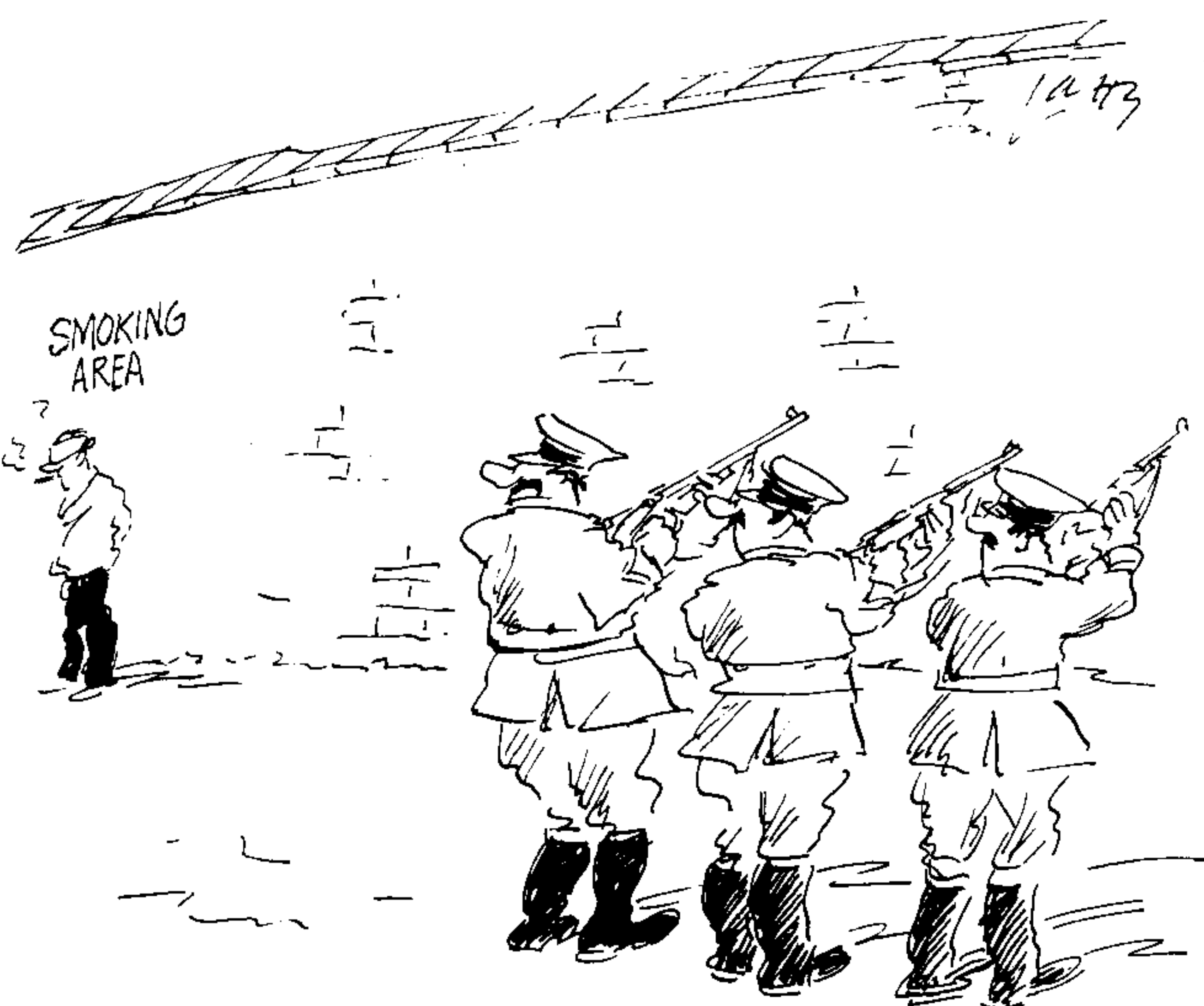
COCKLEBUGGER: So your case, Mr Redface, could be summed up, could it not, by the popular expression "Blonds do not prefer gentleman"?

(Three-day recess as court recovers from laughter at judicial bon mot)

The judge then summed up the case, advising the jury not to award Mr Dreamcoat damages of more than "the cost of a pair of trousers".

FOREMAN: £200,000 and an autograph, please.

The case and the magazine then ended



BOSTON HYATT INTERNATIONAL

Dear Bill,

I can't tell you how sorry I was to have to v.s. on your seventy-ninth shindig at the El Morocco Rooms in Deal. I gather from the Major that a good time was had by all, though I'm sorry to hear about Maurice's little accident in the ensuing fire.

As you may have gathered, I had hoped to be well and truly out of all the ghastliness this time round. I've had my share of bad eggs over the years, not to mention offal and one occasion a brown-paper bag full of sheep's excrement thrown by a disgruntled hill farmer. Even the Boss, I think, had determined to come to America, earn a few spondoolicks to pay the central heating bill in Chester Square, and generally shake the dust of the septic isle off her Max Rayne high heels.

First morning of the campaign, sure enough, a bunch of flowers in appalling taste wrapped in cellophane and distressing blue plastic ribbons was delivered to the flat with a little card saying "Best wishes for your trip to America, yours affectionately, J. Major." The message was clear, to me at least. The boss was to be out of the way, while little Mr Hercules did his number on the high wire. By all means, as far as I was concerned, and I hoped he'd break his bloody neck.

"Poor John," the Boss observed with a patronising inclination of her head. "How very kind, when he must have so much on his mind. Now, where is my in-flight word-processor?"

We were not due to leave for another three days, and all seemed to be going as planned, at least as far as we were concerned - little Major admittedly making a total prat of himself by rotting Kinnock instead of rallying the troops for the millennium - when one day there was a sudden rat-a-tat-tat on the knocker soon after midnight. Having no domestic staff whatsoever, yours truly staggered to the door and began the lengthy business of switching off the various alarms, drawing bolts and unlocking locks.

Hunched on the doorstep with his collar turned up and looking v. sheepish was the new Party Chairman, that big thug Patten. I don't know whether you've seen him? Looks like some sort of barmy hayseed leaning on a gate with straw in his hair. Never really one of us, and a Left-Footer to boot. Could he come in? A bit of a crisis.

By this time the Boss was roused, her hair in curlers, an icy smile on her face. "Dear Chris, how lovely to see you! What can be the trouble?"

It was a sorry tale that our bucolic friend had to tell. The Opinion Polls were sliding away from us, no reason to panic, but John was wondering whether she would care to join him on the platform for their big rally? We were by now sitting in the drawing room, and Margaret put her head on one side in a thoughtful manner. "Let me just get this right, Chris. My understanding of it was that I was to resign as I was an electoral liability. Is that correct?" At this Patten looked rather nonplussed and began muttering under his breath about hasty and unthoughtout decisions. "Well, Chris, am I an electoral liability?"

"Er, Margaret," he began, "John feels, and I feel too that it's time to bury the

hatchet, if only for the sake of party unity..."

"You haven't answered my question," she persisted, switching on the low-level gamma rays, at which I observed our corpulent friend begin to smoulder. "It seems rather odd, doesn't it, to invite an electoral liability to be on the platform?"

You've probably seen those pictures, Bill, of chaps in Inquisition Days being stretched to unnatural lengths under the gaze of a beady-eyed bishop or twain. Such was the fate of poor Patten. He left the house at three a.m. a broken man, but with the Boss's assurance that she would indeed appear at the rally.

So, once again, the old girl scented blood, and yours truly was whirled along in the wake as of yore. Grisly reptiles on every hand snapping away, microphones thrust down one's throat, repulsive old ladies pushing forward to squeeze one's fingers in a sticky grip, all the horror of the mob. M., I need hardly say, rejuvenated, eyes gleaming, nostrils wide, making Major's present lot look like bloody amateurs.

With all this hullabaloo, I was assuming that America was off and I could join you for your beano, but it was not to be. A very odd thing happened. I had just taken my treble-strength nightcap and was negotiating my way up the three stairs to my bedroom, when the old girl suddenly appeared before me like that woman who washes her hands in the Shakespeare. "Denis," she intoned, "I want to talk to you."

I say this was odd, because I can't honestly recall an occasion for a good twenty years when the old lady has chosen to confide in me. Groggy as I was from a bottle or two earlier in the evening and the lateness of the hour, I am not sure I can remember her precise words, but the upshot was that not even she could prevent the Titanic from going down on this occasion.

"You and I are going to America, Denis. We have done the best we can, we will not be here to witness Mr Major's humiliation." "Thank God for that!" I think I interrupted - and may have sung a few bars of "California here I come". "Be quiet, Denis, there's a love. Of course the Party will be very angry. They will seek revenge. Poor John, they will want another leader."

"Well", I began, pulling myself together, "What about Hurd? Snooty bugger, I agree, but a safe pair of hands." Even at the time I was vaguely aware that my speculations were not being as well received as they might have been, but I blundered on. "Or Patten, I suppose? Or Heseltine? A total shit, I agree, but with some notion of leadership..."

M.'s voice cut through me like a chainsaw. "Don't be ridiculous, Denis, you are obviously drunk."

I must have passed out pretty soon after that, and was haunted with terrible nightmares. We were back at Number Ten, Mr and Mrs Kinnock had been executed by the SAS, Heseltine was in prison awaiting trial for treason, and Margaret had in some way altered the constitution to stop any more elections taking place. I wonder what it all means?

M. is out at a lunch and I'm all alone in the hotel room feeling suicidal. I know we used to laugh at that sort of thing when we were younger, but do you think that shrink friend of Maurice's - Weidenfeld? Lambton? no matter - would be prepared to give me a session on his sofa? Not a word to any of the boys, obviously.

Yours in the valley of the shadow,

Denis

Lines Written To Commemorate The Closure Of Punch

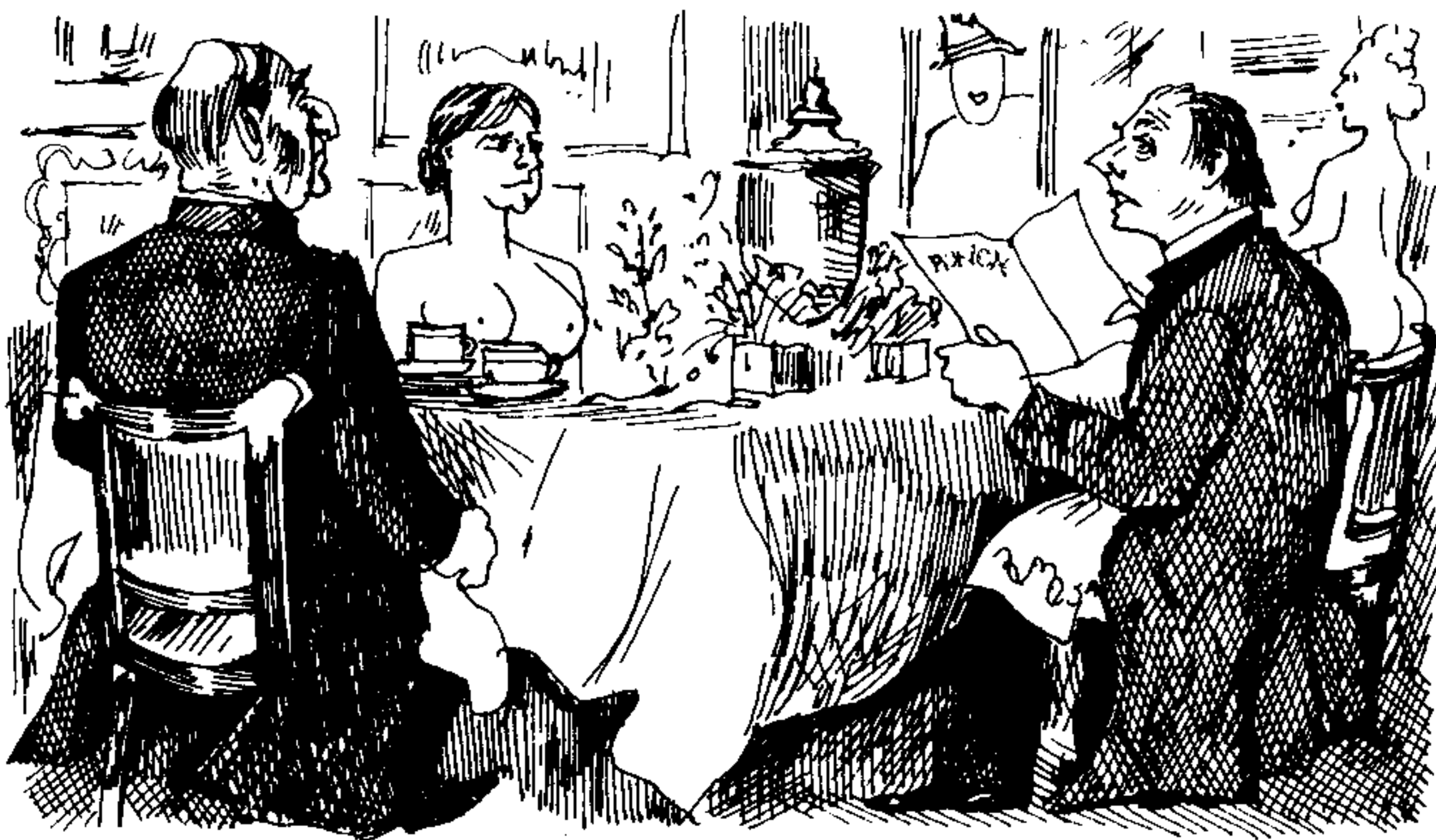
by William Rees-McGonagall

'Twas in the year Eighteen Hundred and Forty-One
That the great magazine *Punch* was first begun.
Many humourists of the time contributed to its pages,
Though not Charles Dickens, who was used to working
for rather higher wages.

By the year Eighteen Hundred and Forty-Three
People began to say "It is not as funny as it used to be."
And so it continued through the long reign of Victoria
When one of its most famous cartoonists was Sir
George Du Maurier
(And even then it was known as "the magazine
guaranteed to bore yer".)

When Edward VII came in due course to the throne
The weekly arrival of *Punch* was greeted with a groan.
Then came George V to guide the nation
But still the magazine maintained its healthy
circulation.

Classic Cartoons from the Archives



TRUE HUMILITY

The Curate. "OH NO, MY LORD, I ASSURE YOU! PARTS OF IT ARE EXCELLENT!"



THE MAN WHO FOUND *PUNCH* FUNNY

What was the reason for this extraordinary feat?
The answer lay in the waiting rooms of Wimpole Street.
There piled high for the patients to see
Were hundreds of copies of the London Charivari.

The dental profession continued to give it unfailing
support,
Even though the readership among the rest of the
population was nought.
And so it continued for many decades more,
A national institution that only sufferers from
neuralgia actually saw.

By this time easily the best-known feature of *Punch*
Was the table at which the wits sat around for lunch.
On it were carved the names of many famous men,
Such as the Duke of Edinburgh and Mr Anthony
Wedgwood Benn.

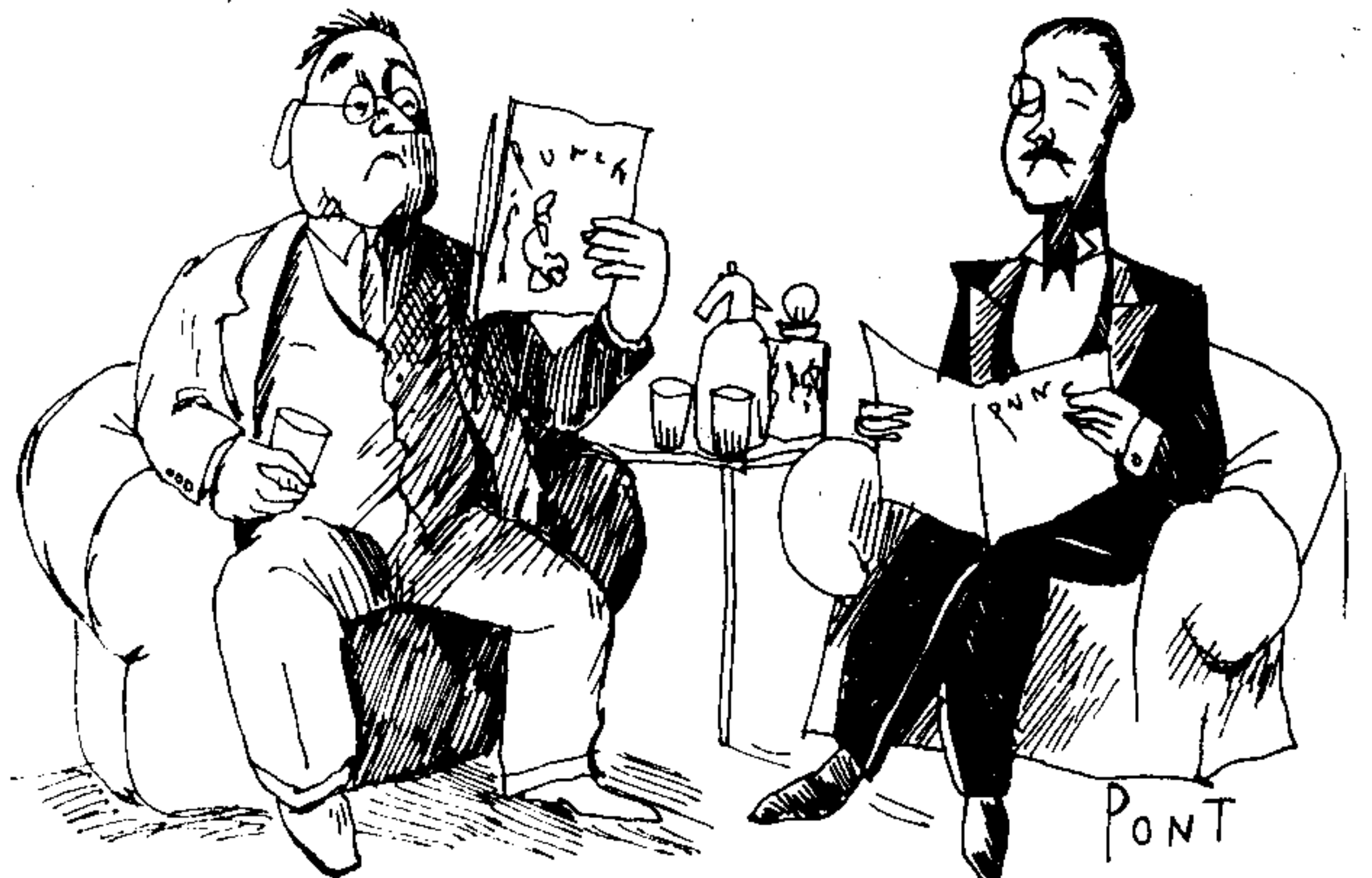
Year after year *Punch* continued to induce a deep
slumber,
Particularly with its special annual Motor Show
Number.
Other features which failed to hold the attention
Were "Punch On Food" and "A Special Humorous
Supplement On Your Home Extension".

Among the many contributors whose work was not
enjoyed
Were William Davis, Alan Coren, Roy Hattersley,
Hunter Davies, Lord Mancroft and Sir Clement Freud.
Among other tedious columnists who performed
yeoman service
Were Sheridan Morley and Radio 4's Libby Purves.

But then at last the penny finally dropped
And the subscriptions from the dentists suddenly
stopped.
After more than a century of giving it their money
They realised that *Punch* had never actually been
funny.

The owners of *Punch* did not know what to do
As they saw the disappearance of their revenue.
So the men in suits hired a member of the younger
generation,
And made him the editor in the hope of recovering
their circulation.

However this did not prove a very good bet
As David Thomas proved to be the least funny editor
yet.
Despite a publicity campaign costing a million and a
half.
Punch had to close down, finally giving everyone a
good laugh.



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

"FAILURE TO FIND *PUNCH* AMUSING"



Nigel Dempster

Mail Diary

Quarter-pounder for Tracy

■ MY NEW friend Tracy Smith, daughter of Eric and Ethel Smith of Chigwood, confides in me over the counter that she has just had a quarter-pounder and would like another one!

Tracy, 17, is a popular apprentice hair stylist at the

fashionable Chigwood unisex salon wittily entitled A CUT ABOVE.

Tracy is a regular habitué of my branch of McDonalds but this is the first time she has let me into her confidence.

"Next time," she says coquettishly, "I'll have some fries."

Hamburger that's a hit

■ WAYNE Smith, brother of beautician and local socialite Tracy Smith, who is no stranger to these pages, whispered to me yesterday as I was clearing up the tables that I had taken his hamburger away by mistake and that he would punch my face in if I didn't give it back.

Wayne, 16, is a keen motorcyclist and devotee of the rock band Def Leppard.

I feel sure we will be hearing more of Wayne!

Love at first bite?

■ THERE was a new star at the front of the queue when I came on duty yesterday. Sultry raven-haired Karen Brown has just turned 18 and is studying word-processing at a local academy. She also has a quick line in verbal repartee.

"Wake up, granddad!" she yelled wittily, "and get me an Egg McMuffin. I haven't got all day!"

Later, however, she let me into the secret of her current in-

Daily Mail — a bit of a giveaway!



fatuation.

"I don't 'alf fancy a milkshake," she pouted.

And all for under £3! The value is amazing.

PS ■ THERE was a familiar face on the pavement last week when I went out to sweep up the plastic

cartons.

It was none other than television personality Ronald McDonald, who was encouraging all the children to come in and have a glamorous party for less than £1.99 per head!

I asked Ronald how it felt to be a clown working in a hamburger bar.

"You should know, Nigel," he said enigmatically.

VILLAGE MOURNS MAN IN SUIT

by Times Reporter
Alan Hamitup

BIRDS twittered from every bough. Golden daffodils peeped shyly through the emerald sward. Swains plodded mournfully o'er the lea to pay their final respects to the man they all knew as "that rich bugger who lives in the big house".

The plangent knell of the muffled bells of the ancient, weather-beaten village church of St Diana the Virgin sounded a grief-stricken plaint across the gnarled, tiled roofs of humble cottage and noble manor house alike. (*This is terrible — let's have more please.* S. Jenkins.)

As a chill April wind (*check*

month please, sub) rustled through the bare, ruined choirs of chestnuts lining the village cricket field, six sturdy villeins bore the mighty oaken coffin of their sovereign liege lord, the 14th Man In A Suit, to his last resting place in the resplendent, gilded vault where lay the remains of generations of his noble forebears.

Humbug

Earlier a packed church listened in reverent awe as Lord St John of Creepsley spoke movingly for several hours of the man he described as "a very parfit, gentil earl, truly the flour of chivalrie, yclept Johnny Suit". "There has never breathed," said Lord Asshole, "so courtly, so brave and so caring a representative of our wonderful British aristocracy, of which I myself am now proud and privileged to be a leading member. Although I never met him, I feel that I knew him better than anyone else. We shall not look upon his like again. In the morning, in the evening, at the rising of the sun and the going down of the same, we shall remember him, whoever he was."

Then a lone trumpet sounded a sorrowful Last Post, which echoed across the mist-laden fields of autumn (*check season*) like a dying sheep (*check animal*) as (*contd p. 94*).



THE Hereford branch of Arthritis Care would like to thank all the people who turned out to their coffee morning on Thursday, December 12, despite the bitterly cold weather.

We were particularly pleased that the Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs Turbutt, were unable to attend.

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47½

Monday

I refuse to get downhearted in any measure by the fact that we are behind in all the seven polls published today. The Daily Mail has surely got it right when it says KINNOCK HASN'T A HOPE as its main news story. These people have been in journalism for a very long time, so I am sure that they know what they are talking about. And, moreover, why would Mr Heseltine look so pleased with himself if we were going to lose? He really is a morale-booster. The other night he came up with a real cracker. He said that if Labour won "we would get our Kinnocks in a twist". This was nearly as good as my joke when I said that, if Labour won, I would be having "Nightmares In Downing Street". This was suggested by my friend Jeffrey Archer, who said it was based on the name of a very popular new film and was what he called a "sound bit" — i.e. the bit that they pick up on the soundtrack of the TV.

Tuesday

The Labour Party has really scored an own goal this time! They have produced a film about a little girl who goes deaf because of our health cuts. Mr Waldegrave called a press conference to say that the film was jolly unfair and worse than anything Hitler did in Nazi Germany.

For once I am beginning to think that Mr Waldegrave is getting the hang of this electioneering! As a result of his hard-hitting press

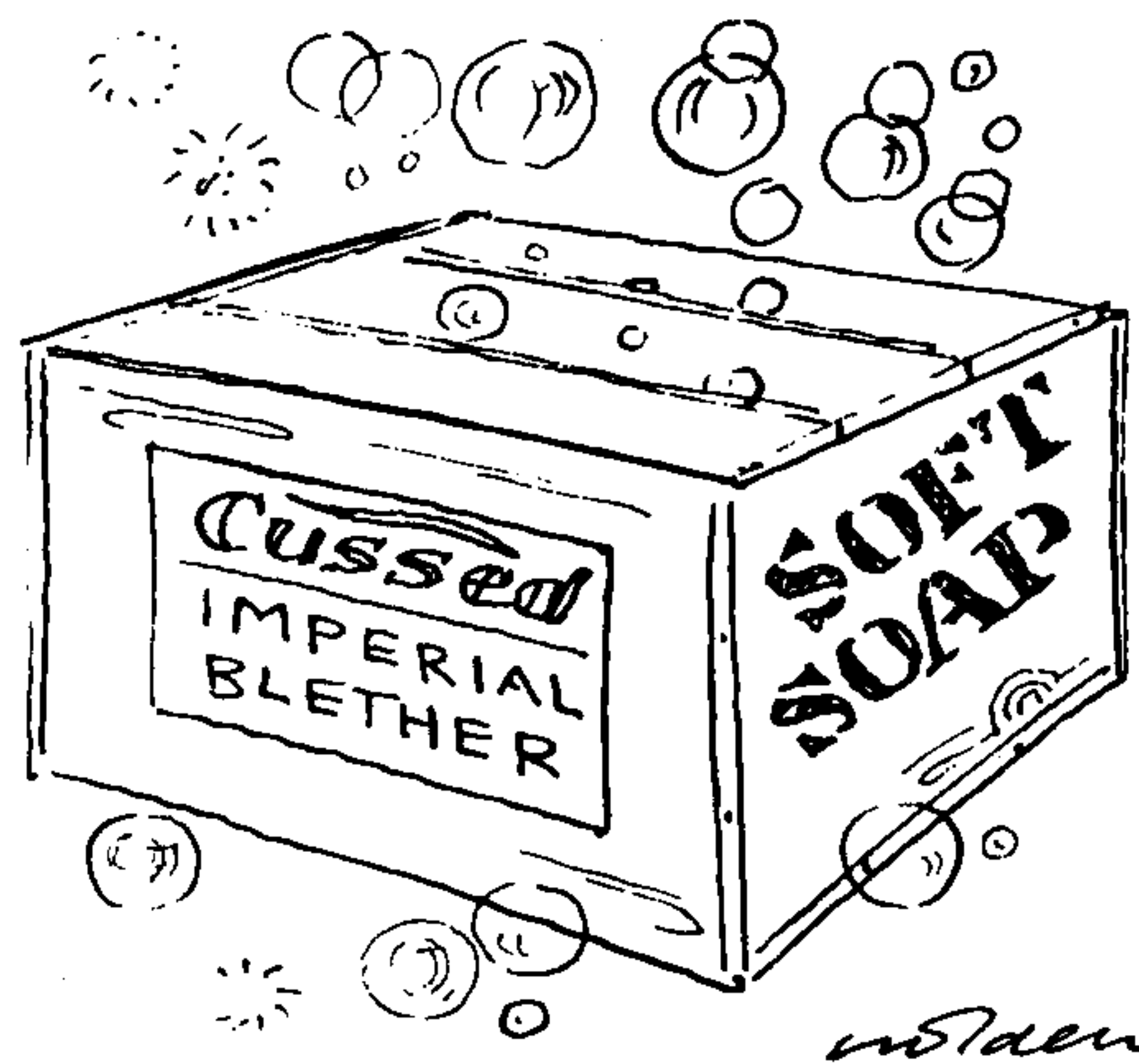
conference, we are now only nine points behind.

Wednesday

Today I am going to unveil another secret weapon. My friend Chris tells me that it will turn the tide, not of course that it needs turning, as the Daily Express confirmed today with its headline MAJOR HOME AND DRY — ASHDOWN PROBABLY A POOF. Anyway, at today's big rally I am going to show that I can be "Mr Nasty", if I deem it appropriate in my judgement. Oh yes. Mr Woodward, the young man who has been brought in to run my very successful campaign, has given me a little wooden box to get up on when I make my speeches. "That will put you head and shoulders above Mr Kinnock," said Chris, giving Mr Woodward one of his funny winks.

Thursday

This morning David Mellor bounded on board the battlebus, waving a morning paper and shouting: "Great news, John. We're



20 points ahead on the polls. Mr Kinnock has conceded victory."

"That must be as a direct result of my soapbox idea," I said.

However, David burst out laughing — "Ha, ha, ha. April fool! We're 10 points behind."

I like to think that I have as good a sense of humour as the next man, but I did not find this particular joke amusing in any way whatsoever.

Friday

I notice that Norma Lamont has not been pulling his weight in this campaign, to my somewhat annoyance. After all, it was him who got us into this temporary economic downturn and it is time he stood up to answer prepared questions about it from selected Tory supporters. I brought this up at our meeting this morning, as we

were going round the M25 in the battlebus. Mr Woodward, who used to work on That's Life and knows all about how to make people popular on television, explained that some people were "camera-friendly" and others, through no fault of their own, were not. "Norma Lamont is a no-no," he said. "So is Waldegrave and so is Selwyn Gummer."

I must have looked surprised at this, because he continued:

"Particularly Gummer. No one wants to see a boring little nonentity with glasses who has nothing to say and who loses votes every time he opens his mouth."

"No, they don't," I agreed firmly and for some reason they all started laughing — no doubt to relieve the tension.

Saturday

My friend Chris produced his trump card which he has kept up his sleeve until the last minute. It is a brilliant TV broadcast in which we tell everyone what the Labour Party's phone number is. Just to annoy them!

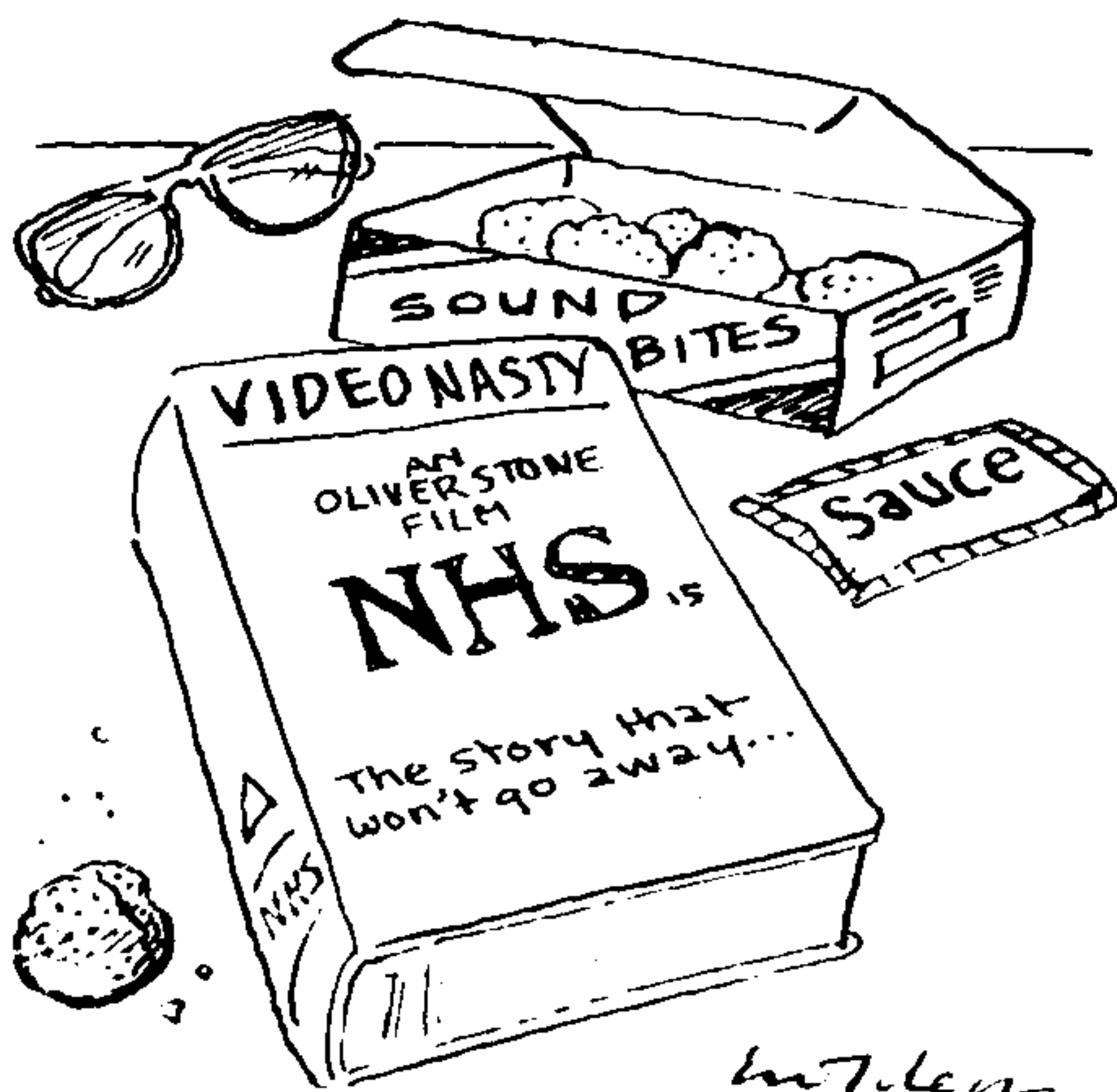
It worked brilliantly! Hundreds of people rang Mr Kinnock up, pledging support, giving money and complaining about our broadcast.

Who says we haven't got any Big Ideas left?

Sunday

Tonight I went to Wembley. But not to watch football with Mr Mellor. He says there will be plenty of time for that after Thursday. Oh no. It was Celebrity Night, when some of the biggest names in sport and showbusiness pledged their support for our campaign.

For example, there was Trevor Bailey, and a pop star called Bill Wyman, and Gordon Banks, who played in goal for England, and Patrick Moore of TV fame and many more. My friend Jeffrey Archer, whom I recognised instantly, introduced me personally to all of them. Trevor Bailey made a very funny joke when we shook hands. "Who are you?" he said, pretending not to know who I was. The idea obviously caught on, because everybody I met used the same joke. This became increasingly not very funny, in my judgement, but it made for a relaxed atmosphere. So relaxed, in fact, that many people fell asleep during my speech and no one felt obliged to have a lot of formal clapping when I finished.



Monday

Guess who phoned me up to offer me his support? David Owen, no less!

Now I know we are going to win. I had a long talk with him and expressed my considerable sympathy with his current predicament. Being alone in the wilderness when you have once been centre stage as leader of a Big Party.

"Oh yes," he said. "I knew you would sympathise. We have a lot in common."

Polling Day

We are in no way worried about the outcome of the election. It has been a brilliant campaign, and on the Battlebus I made a little speech thanking everyone. "You have all played your part. And even if we were to lose," I said, "nobody would be to blame."

"Yes he would!" they all shouted in unison and pointed at me. I didn't understand the joke, but they all laughed like at a pantomime and it showed that morale is very high indeed.

(To be continued?)



"Well, it's not a cultural desert – that's Michael Ignatieff and Waldemar Januszczak"

Apology

Over the past eighteen months this newspaper, along with many others, may have given the impression that Mr John Major was a competent leader of the Conservative Party. Headlines such as the controversial CAPABLE AS F***! may have insinuated that Mr Major was in some way up to the job as Prime Minister.

We now realise that there was not a scintilla of truth in this

allegation and that Mr Major is in fact "a total w*****".

There is, we accept, no foundation for any of our claims about his ability, charm, sensitivity, vision, grasp of economic detail and enormous brainpower.

We would therefore like to apologise unreservedly to Mr Major for the damage done to his reputation and for any inconvenience our uncritical support may have given him.

© All newspapers

SPINDOCTOR FINLAY'S

CASE
BOOK



DIARY

The Poetess At Last Recognises Her True Worth

The editor phoned and asked me
Is your name Wendy Cope?
Would you take some money
For a yard of old rhyming rope?

I said, "When do you want it?"
He said, "As fast as you can do"
I said, "I'll start just as soon as
I've downed a bottle or two"

The editor said he'd like them
About all the usual stuff:
Lunch and bad weather and poets
And boyfriends cutting up rough

And having one too many
And feeling rather down
And having another too many
Vide: "Tears of a Clown"

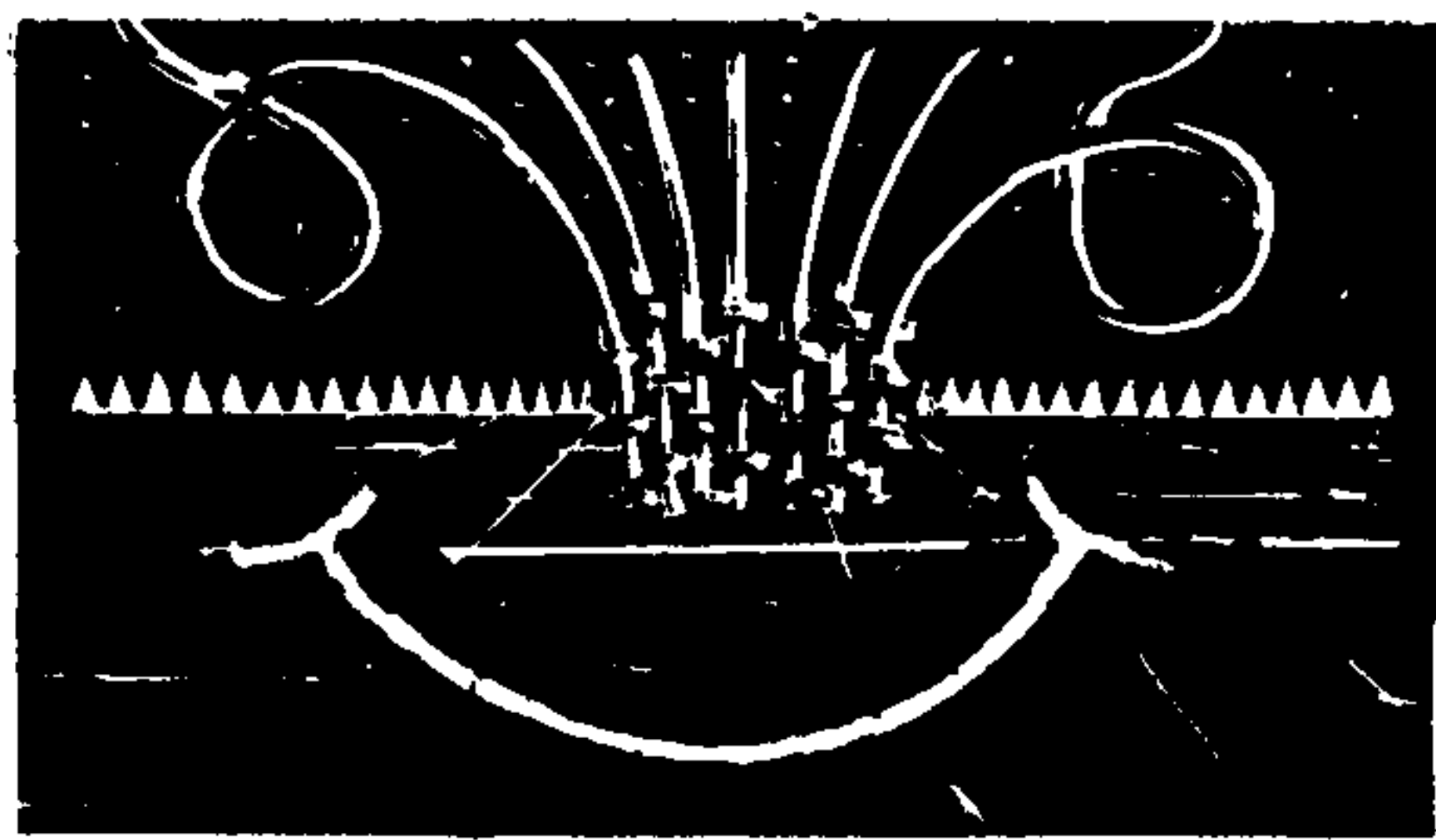
But when I quoted my prices
He said that cash was tight;
And instead he'd print Dorothy Parker
Who was no longer in copyright.

Why I Put Men In My Poems

I often write about men
And how they let you down
Which is all very handy
Because "down" rhymes with "frown"
And "noun" and "crown" and "town".
I also like the word "men"
Because it rhymes with "wren"
And "then" and "den" and "pen".
So I write to all the editors
Saying would you like a poem about men
-- Again?
They say, "Yes, but could you make it scan
This time?"
I say, "Of course I can make it scan and I can
also make
It rhyme."
So they cough
And let me off.

Another Poem About Men

I look in the fridge
And find it empty



WENDY
COPE

But nothing rhymes with empty
So I look again
And find a hen
Which gives me the chance
To make this another poem about men.

Why Are Other Poets So Glum With Me?

Why are other poets so glum with me?
Where are their poetic loyalties?
Why do they grow snappy
And so very unhappy
Whenever I mention my royalties?

Which If Any Great Poets Might I Have Fancied?

I suppose I could have fancied Milton
Though his feet might smell of Stilton
Or maybe I could have gone for Keats
If he'd been better between the sheets
I could have had a date with Kipling
But his muscles were far from rippling
Dylan Thomas could have made me frisky
If his breath hadn't smelt of whisky
A crush on Shakespeare, I might have fear'd,
If it wasn't for that awful beard
I might have gone for Rupert Brooke
But he had that awful pansy look
And I couldn't take the loopy stare
Of the also-bearded mad John Clare
And the creepiest guy around
Must surely be old Ezra Pound
Wordsworth and his daffodils
Could never give me the thrills

And the great Alexander Pope
Doesn't appeal to Wendy Cope
Leaving me with Edith Sitwell
Which doesn't make me feel a bit well.

What Do You Think?

A man called Desmond
A bloke called Ron
A boy called Andrew
A guy called John
They all vanished, for better or worse
And all I had asked them
Was what they thought of my verse.

Buses I have Written Poems To Past Lovers On In The Past Fortnight

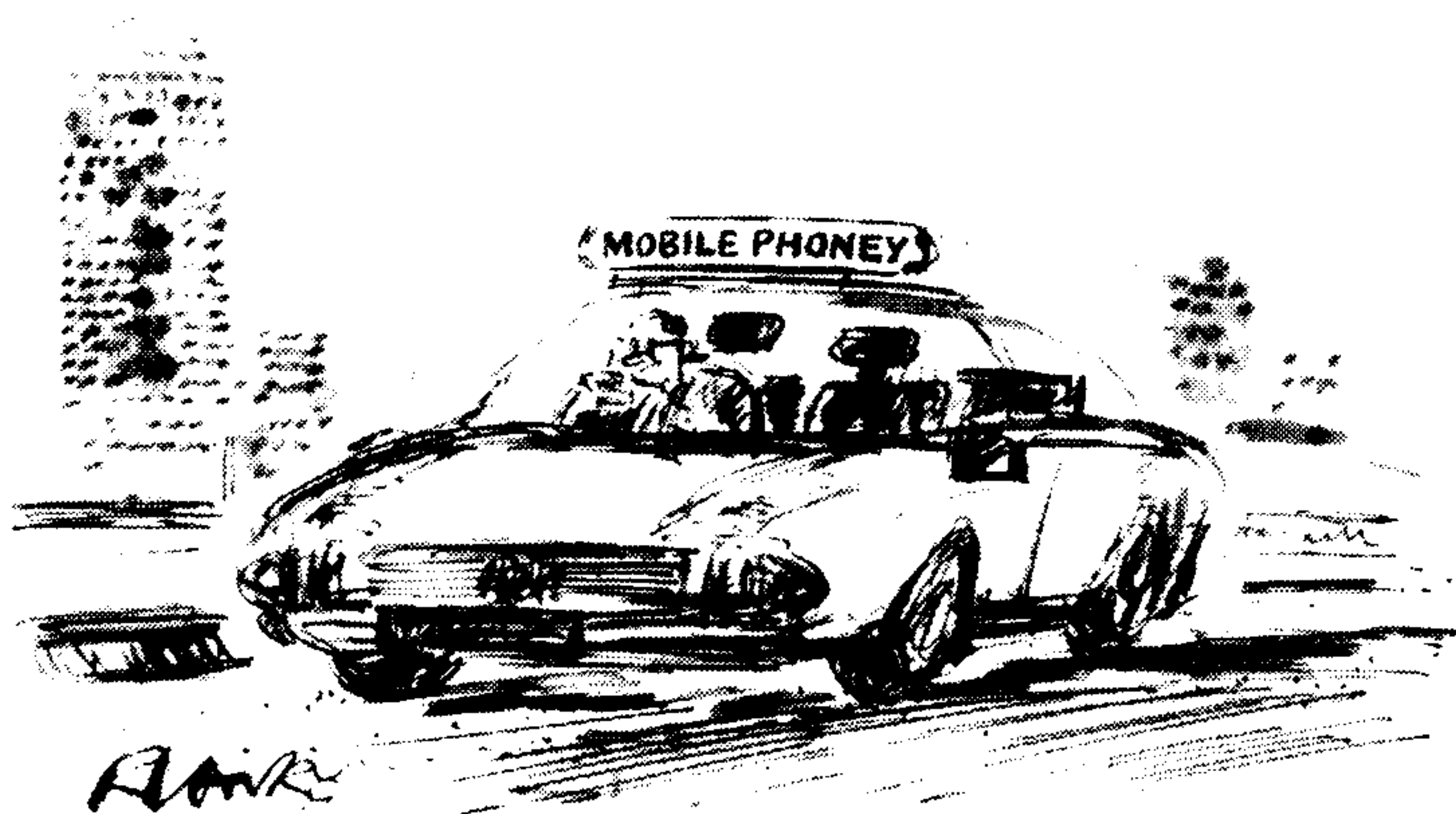
56, 14, 29, 11,
19, 23, 24, 8.
17, 8, 44, 7,
4, 12, 18 (late).

Without A Punchline

Just occasionally, I write poems which
Don't have any sort of rhyme at all.
Instead, they just meander on
And then finish without a punchline.

Things I Must Do Today

Fetch my laundry
Darn my socks
Put my old sheets
In a box.
Have a drink,
Make some toast.
Go shopping for
The Sunday roast.
Watch some telly
Sip some tea
Give the milkman
Thirty pee.
What a lot
Of boring labour
But apparently not
To the man at Faber.



★ Elsie is picked up by tweedy Robert Maxwell in a Cheshire pub but he collapses and dies behind the wheel of his Jaguar. The coroner's verdict is death from natural causes but Maxwell's widow blames Elsie.

30 Years of
Coronation
Street

The CVCP argues that charging tuition fees to students is the only way to finance student expansion. We believe the CVCP must direct its energy into squeezing more money out of the Government rather than attacking poverty stricken students.

- 2 Poorer people will be discriminated against.
- 3 The whole education system will be fundamentally undermined. The principle of meritocracy will no longer apply.

University of London Union leaflet

Literary Review

Big and boaring

Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being

Ted Hughes

(Faber, £18.99)

TED HUGHES was once described by Sylvia Plath as "the only one huge enough for me". He has certainly come out with a whopper this time.

Shakes and the Goddess of Complete Being is a total explanation of Shakespeare's complete works. According to Dead Huge, they're all based on a single "myth", or "Tragic Equation", which only he has discovered.

He has derived this potty myth from a combination of Shakespeare's early narrative poems, *Venus & Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. In the first, the divine power of female sexuality erupts when Adonis is unwise enough to reject the advances of Venus, the Great Goddess — a symbolic Boar charges him and kills him. In the second, Tarquin rapes Lucrece. According to Hughes this is because, this time, the Boar of sexuality has somehow become part of the hero, turning him into a madman.

Hughes has pasted these two stories together to make a mythic structure which he then hails as the real meaning of Shakespeare's plays. They're all about the different forms of the overthrow of the rational by the irrational, or, to put it another way, about the relation of the male heroes to the uncontrollable sexual power of the Goddess. Or, to put it another way, about the Boar.

Ted Hughes has always had a thing about fierce animals, such as hawks, pike and piggies. Here he has contrived to make all of Shakespeare about a sow (the Boar symbolises the female, remember). That, by common consent, sows play a relatively minor role in Shakespeare's plays is neither here nor there. It's a *myth*, innit?

Hughes is just hugely over-excited about this saucy porker. "Her combination of gross whiskery nakedness and riotous carnality is seized by the mythic imagination, evidently, as a sort of uterus on the loose — upholstered with breasts, not so much many-breasted as a mobile tub entirely made up of female sexual parts, a woman-sized,

multiple udder on trotters", he writes feverishly. "Most alarming of all is that elephantine, lolling mouth under her great ear-flaps, like a Breughel-like nightmare vagina, baggy with over-production, famous for gobbling her piglets, magnified and shameless, exuberantly omnivorous and insatiable, swamp-ing the senses."

Phworr! No wonder, for a man, the Boar symbolises "everything about female sexuality that is awesome, alien, terrifying and 'beyond' the reaches of his soul", and which can only be contained "within ritual, 'religious', quasi-magical procedures". (And for women?)

In writing his plays, Hughes explains, Shakespeare managed personally to assimilate the Boar, at least "for a decade either side of the turn

stupidities, Hughes hints at where Shakespeare might have acquired his supposed fascination with hogs: "As a country boy, and the nephew of several farmers, Shakespeare enjoyed a familiarity with pigs that is not irrelevant to his myth." (Not too familiar, let's hope — not the sweet Swan of Avon, puhleeze.)

Mostly, Hughes just ploughs on through the plays, looking for Adonis and Tarquin, the Goddess and the Boar — and always finding them, since all the mythic archetypes can assume any different aspect that Hughes cares to think of. If they're not one thing, they're another. The Goddess can be one character or split up into various different ones, for example. And if the Tragic Equation doesn't seem to be there at all? No matter. "The mythic terminology appears in the finished work no more than the mathematics (without which they would have been unthinkable and impossible) appear in the nuclear reaction and flash of the bomb." Fine, fine.

Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being is a classic example of the work of an autodidact: energetic, ambitious and valueless because it has never been exposed to criticism or even self-doubt. He has the fear-

his fantasies in spurious scientific imagery. He keeps gabbling away about a "mythic power circuit", force fields, double exposures, dial panels, polaroids, red giants and black dwarves, holograms, cyclotrons, "the multiple helix of this particular pattern", and the like. He is particularly keen on the difference between the right and left brain, remarking that "the Boar and Adonis meet, that is, in the corpus callosum". Oh, I see.

At one choice moment, discussing *Hamlet*, he even uses this gambit to explain why it is virtuous of him never to mention anything discordant with his theory: "Once again, I shall resolutely ignore everything, but the skeletal essentials of my theme. If the X-ray plate moves even slightly out of focus, everything will disappear in the mass of complications." Even this sentence doesn't give him a moment's pause.

Shakespeare, claims Hughes, was a "psycho-biological" type, "a rare type, but a type" — a shaman. Once shamans were found in Siberia but now, we may infer, they are confined to a tiny area near Exeter.



of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries". "Elsewhere, in every other individual, the rejection continues to be made, the Boar charges, the madness erupts." I'll say. Women, eh? Can't live with 'em, can't live without 'em.

In one sublime moment, outstanding even in a book studded like a plum pudding with memorable

some confidence of the true crank, predicting what he will find and rejoicing to "find" it.

Hughes is writing the gospel of his own peculiar religion here. Myth, of course, needs no proof and is, by the same token, impervious to contradiction. But, like many a nutter before him, from L. Ron Hubbard to the bag-ladies, Hughes dresses up



BOOKS & BOOKMEN

■ IN EYE 786 we revealed that entrants for the 1991 Ian St James Awards were disgruntled because they had not received the critiques they were promised when they submitted their stories and £5 entry fees.

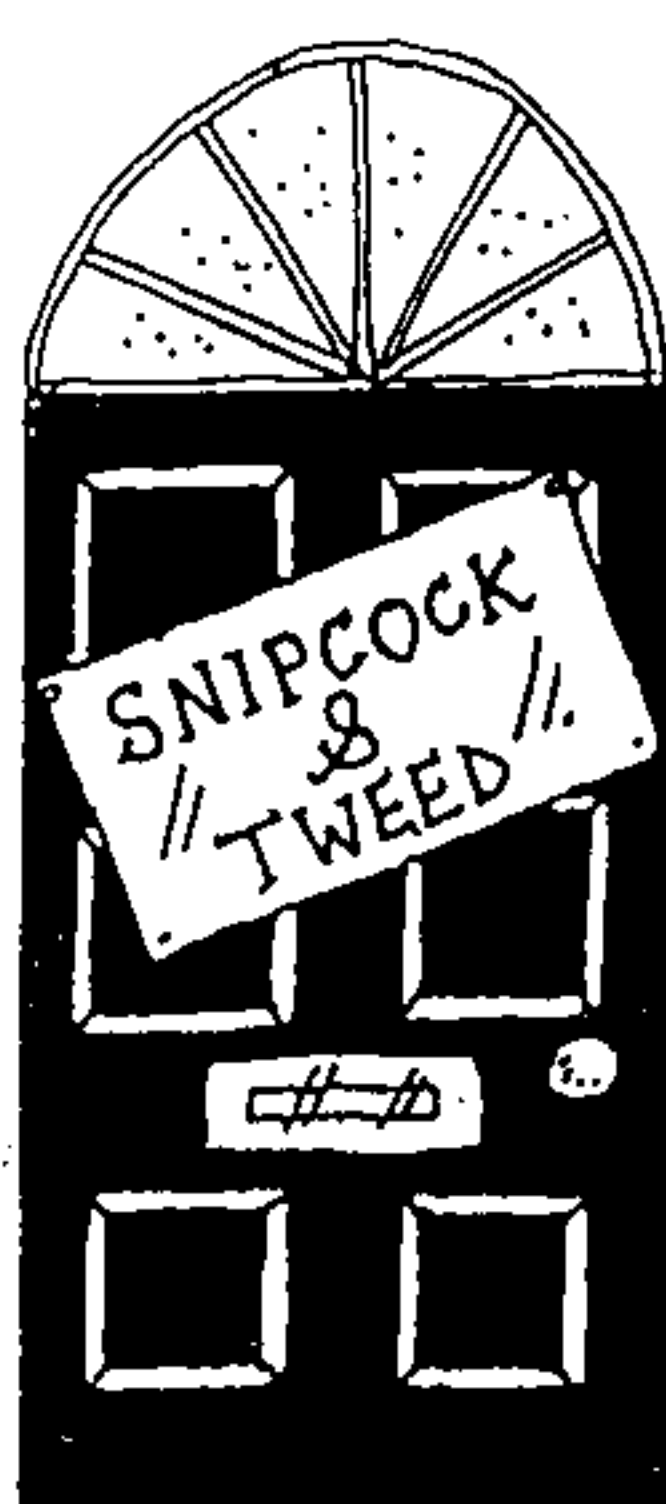
One entrant who eventually received his 1991 critique resubmitted the same story for the 1992 awards and was intrigued by the contrast between the earlier and later critiques. The 1991 critique consisted of a Xeroxed form with four boxes ticked, explaining that the story "flowed smoothly", that the writing was "fresh and innovative" and "impressive", that the author had a "particularly good ear for dialogue" and was "a natural storyteller".

However, the 1992 critique dismissed the same story as "extravagant writing". The author's dialogue was now described as "average". Nor did this year's reader like the author's use of "the extremely long sentence which is a regular ploy throughout". All in all, the story was consigned to the "almost unreadable" category.

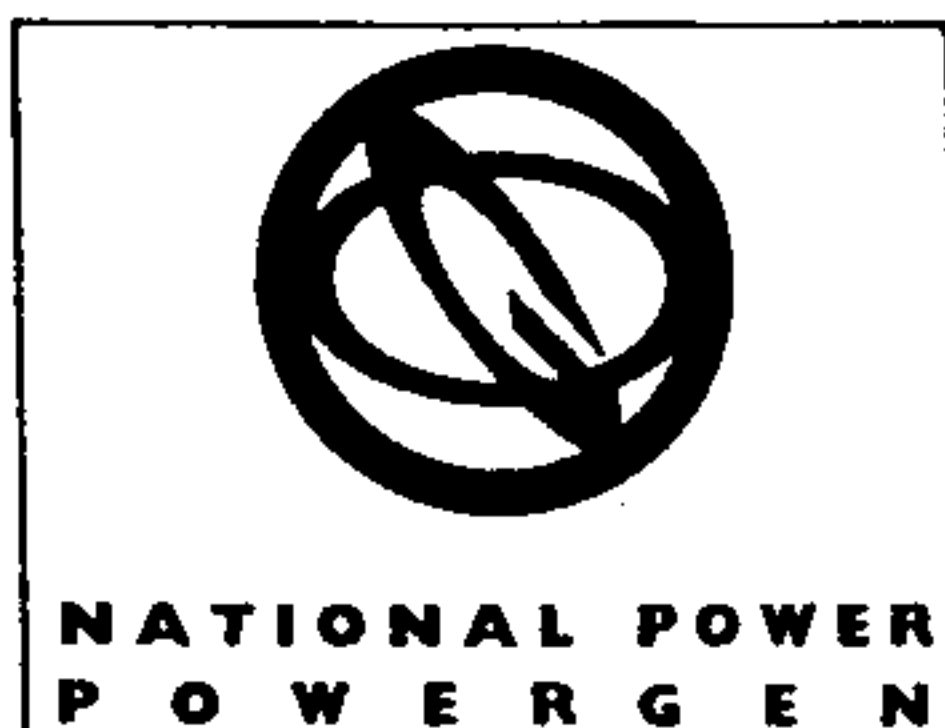
HarperCollins received 4,000 entries at £5 each in 1991. This year, such are the administrative burdens of producing these invaluable critiques, that the entry fee was increased to £8.

□ IT WAS probably just as well that West Indian novelist Caryl Phillips, author of *Cambridge*, failed to file up to the Sunset Times literary banquet two weeks ago. Caryl Phillips was only the second winner of the £5,000 Young Writer of the Year Award which last year went to Helen Simpson. Perhaps the paper's editor and the evening's host, Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill, thought that only women were eligible because he expressed his disappointment that Ms Phillips couldn't be present.

'Bookworm'



ENERGY



Green with ennui

ONE so far unsung achievement of the Major Government has been its deft handling of the environment as a political issue.

Without spending a penny, it has made enough of the right noises to convince enough people that it is on the side of the green angels — and thus remove the issue from the election agenda entirely.

In fact everyone has been duped by a series of half-hearted starts on half-baked ideas and committees, by friendly noises about the environment and by the Government's flattery of Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace. Their views were invited (they would have been forthcoming anyway) only to be interred in the archives of the energy department.

The strategy of John Wakeham, the energy secretary, and Chris Patten, the party chairman and a former environment secretary, was to do enough to remove the threat of such matters becoming a hot potato at the polls — and in this, if nothing else, they have succeeded.

There has been no reduction in pollution or in the use of energy, even with industry in slump. And there has been no switch of generating capacity away from polluting fuels into renewables.

One of the most bitter critics is a Tory: Andrew Warren of the Association for the Conservation of Energy. He says that in a recession, when factories close, the figures for pollution normally improve. "But we have, uniquely, managed to decrease our gross domestic product by 2.5 percent over the last two years and increase our CO₂ levels by 1.6 percent!"

One reason, he says, is that government policy encourages the public to use *more* energy. "Gas and electricity are zero-rated for VAT, which makes them cheaper. But measures to reduce energy consumption are not. If you insulate your loft or put in energy-saving equipment such as a new tank or valve, you pay 17.5 percent VAT. This is a tax on the environment."

The Government went through the motions of harrying the gas industry, which it had privatised, to surrender its monopoly and reduce its prices, but it failed. British Gas has remained a monopoly, albeit a high-charging private one.

The Government also tried to persuade the electricity generators National Power and PowerGen to promise to buy British coal. That failed too. The two giants told Wakeham politely that the interests of their shareholders came first and if that meant burning gas, importing coal and disgusting orimulsion, wrecking the mining industry and making a hole in the balance of payments, then so be it.

Loud noises were also made about encouraging newcomers to provide competition inside the privatised electricity industry, but they too failed to make the slightest impact on the big boys. The worst case was at Deeside where an independent consortium was given a licence to build a gas-fired power station. It then discovered that British Gas would not sell it any gas. So it had to sell the site with the licence — and the buyer was National Power, with its own secret source of gas.

In August 1991 the Government set up a committee of the great and good, including fragrantly wholesome types like Mary Archer, Hermann Bondi, Gerald Leach and David Lindley, chaired by Colin Moynihan who had become an enthusiastic renewables man, to produce a report on clean energy by January 1992 — supposedly *after* the election which was then expected in the autumn of 1991. The Government managed to keep the committee talking and its report still hasn't appeared. Wakeham did not have to respond to a document he might well have found embarrassing.

In April 1989, criticised for the way it had

abandoned wave energy, the Government set up a two-man inquiry to study the subject for two years, although there was little new to discover. One of the two men swiftly resigned to go to a better-paid job and the Government refused to replace him, leaving scientist Tom Thorpe to soldier on alone. His health has been damaged by the strain — there are still people in the energy establishment who oppose wave energy because they once said it could never pay and they do not intend to be proved wrong. The report is now a year late.

The other two big potential sources — tidal power and offshore wind — have been pushed aside while the Government has allowed small windparks to be set up on land. The total of wind energy planned is only 82 megawatts, compared with 60,000 megawatts capacity of the system — less than a quarter of one percent if all the small independents succeed, which not even the optimists expect.

'Archimedes'

BP

All property is left...



WHILE Robert Horton, chairman of BP, continues to astonish his colleagues with his amazing self-confidence (see *Eyes passim*), he is hoping to be able to distance himself from his former protégé Paul Gatrill.

Gatrill took charge of BP Chemicals' property portfolio in the early 1980s on the personal recommendation of Mr Horton. Both men seemed to move up the BP ladder simultaneously. In 1986, Gatrill took over much of the administration of property in the newly-formed property services unit. In 1988 started the great campaign to "decentralise"; and in three years Gatrill inspired at least 10 property deals. More than 800,000 square feet of property were involved, more than £200 million in immediate purchase and fitting-out costs, and even more in long-term rental costs. The chief result is that BP is left with some 600,000 square feet of empty office space.

Naturally, BP staff must pay the cost of all this: 2,000 redundancies are planned in London alone. The Glasgow HQ will close after the election and once-profitable garages are closing all over the place.

In 1990, Gatrill's activities attracted the attentions of BP's security officer, former Metropolitan police Det Chief Inspector John Simmonds, who found other directors of BP very helpful in his inquiries. It is said that Gatrill was unpopular because his own yacht was even bigger than the one belonging to the company. The inquiries ended abruptly early in 1991 when Gatrill was marched out of his Wenlock Road office by security men.

Worse was to come this year when the *Estates Times* reported in February that the public prosecutor's office in Paris wanted to interview Gatrill in connection with the sale of the BP tower in La Defence at the height of the 1988 boom. The prosecutor made clear in leaks to *Le Monde* that Gatrill was suspected of showing favour to the successful buyer, the French property developer SARI. SARI's boss, Christian Pellerin, and six others have been charged with misuse of corporate assets and falsification of documents.

The matter may not even rest there. A French police chief, Daniel Voiry, shot himself dead recently, leaving a note that "the whole thing [the BP Tower scandal] is going to blow up". Two other property men closely involved with the deal have hanged themselves.

BP's only response to all this so far has been to say that Mr Gatrill left them a long time ago — last year.

TRANSPORT

Tram trauma

MANCHESTER'S long-suffering commuters now know the much-vaunted £140 million Metrolink tram system foist upon them by local Labour politicians will be an expensive and embarrassing disaster.

Although Metrolink's press officers were adamant the system's first phase, Manchester Victoria to Bury, would open on 23 March, few Mancunians believed them after years of false alarms. Sure enough, only hours before the first tram was due to run Metrolink "regretted" that a further two-week hold-up was necessary for more trials. The "big-name opening ceremony with lots of razzmatazz" promised last year by marketing executive Margaret Hyde was thus shunted into a siding: Manchester politicians didn't fancy leaving Queen Brenda standing on wet and windy platforms for a week or two.

Costs have risen so much since Metrolink was first proposed that the many extra lines that were meant to criss-cross Manchester by the end of the century have now gone the way of railway extensions in London's Docklands. And when Metrolink does eventually open it must survive solely on fare revenue. To break even it will need to attract twice the numbers who used the rail lines it has replaced.

Helpfully, the operators have installed a horribly complicated seven-band fare structure with prices higher than the old train fares! (The single fare from Bury to Manchester is set at £1.80 — nearly twice the fare for the same distance on the non-profit-making Tyne & Wear Metro.) Worse still, no timetables have been drawn up, so commuters hoping to make connections with real trains will be left in limbo.

With all stations unmanned, Metrolink has warned that teams of inspectors will travel the network waiting to pounce on penniless joy-riders. This should cause much chaos in the rush-hours when the inspectors will be obliged to wade through hundreds of fuming *standing* commuters yearning for the seats they enjoyed before transport planners "re-vamped" the line.

Fittingly, Metrolink director Don Kenny has naively warned: "Don't compare us with buses and trains." There is little danger of that.

CHARITY

Ackers' yard

THE PRINCE'S Trust has decided on a rapid change of leadership after the *Eye's* focus on chairman Sir James Ackers' style of leadership.

He and chief executive Barry Shuttleworth (salary £40,000) have "resigned" from Birmingham-based subsidiary Prince's Trust Training after the main trust cut off funding.

Matters came to a head when Birmingham Training and Enterprise Council threatened to end its £200,000 training contracts unless the Prince's Trust renewed its support. The trust refused — unless Ackers and Shuttleworth went. One angry board meeting later and they were on their way. Now they plan to form a new business giving "lectures on management".

Ackers' own glorious track record is by now well-known to *Eye* readers — but not perhaps his latest scheme as chairman of the West Midlands regional health authority: "Building a Healthy Birmingham".

This involves shutting down more than a dozen local hospitals and concentrating resources on the already-monstrous site at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Edgbaston — and coincidentally releasing hundreds of acres of valuable development land. The scheme has provoked local fury with politicians united in their opposition and even the normally supine Labour council leader Sir "Dick" Knowles demanding it be halted.



Devon cream tease

THOSE WHO believe corruption and villainy among Britain's finest is limited to the inner cities should consider the case of two CID officers based at Chudleigh in the West Country.

The recent acquittal at Truro crown court of Nigel Priston on charges of burglary came amid allegations of perjury and malpractice levelled at two plain clothes officers, Det Sgt Rush and Det Con Needs, that even Hackney's Knackers would be hard pressed to match.

Mr Priston was arrested in December 1990 and charged with the theft, a few days earlier, of a safe containing £10,000 from the home of his prospective father-in-law, a scrap metal dealer called David Tubby. DS Rush and DC Needs took away just over £200 in cash, an invoice book, a picture of a tractor that Mr Priston had just sold, and some bank statements from Mr Priston's home.

Later they denied ever having had the invoice book until almost the time of the trial. In court they tried to claim that the "evidence" had actually been confiscated the day after the burglary, during their first interview with Mr Priston at his home. Rush continued to claim this even after a property form listing the items, and dated the day of Mr Priston's arrest, had been shown to the jury.

Rush also admitted that for several months he had failed to follow up an alibi that Mr Priston had given. But the final blow to the prosecution case was the revelation that Rush had altered copies of a report he produced for the court, and then denied it under oath.

The intriguing question, of course, is why police took an interest in Mr Priston in the first place, and why their pursuit of him was not affected by minor issues like the lack of any credible evidence pointing in his direction.

The day after the burglary, Rush had met David Tubby in a pub to discuss the case. Rush, Needs and an "associate" of Tubby's, the 6 ft-plus, 18 stone Mr Penfold, share the membership of a freemason's lodge, according to evidence given in court, and despite Rush's claim that the meeting was accidental, it may have marked something of a turning point in his investigation.

After all, this was not a case in which there was a shortage of suspects. Mr Tubby's own son, Sean, was a convicted petty criminal who had done time after stealing from his parents' house before. Moreover, in a number of his criminal endeavours, he had been joined by a man who admitted his own involvement in the burglary, a Mr Brian Owen.

In interviews with police, Owen said Sean Tubby had come to his home carrying a pick axe handle and threatening to smash his face and break his legs if he didn't "own up" to the theft. Despite then being dragged down his garden path into a car containing Tubby senior and the large Mr Penfold, the plucky Owen denied vigorously that he had been threatened by the Tubbys at all.

Owen eventually gave no fewer than seven different versions of events, and his evidence was, needless to say, not very helpful to the prosecution. Indeed, after jurors at Exeter crown court heard of the incident at Owen's house, and another occasion when the Tubbys "visited" the Priston household carrying baseball bats, a number of them complained to the jury clerk that they were frightened by the prospect of Tubby senior recognising them or knowing their address, and the trial was duly moved to Truro.

By the end of the trial, both the prosecutor, Mark Rowsell, and the recorder, a Mrs Calvert, were forced to admit that the evidence of Rush and Needs was utterly unreliable. Recorder Calvert even ordered the preparation of a transcript of Rush's evidence for the local chief constable, should he want to hold an inquiry into the case.

Hackney: arrested development

HEAVY-HANDED police tactics against squatters in Hackney have been dealt a triple-whammy by recent acquittals in "public order" trials.

The charges followed two raids — on a benefit gig and a party — both organised by the borough's much persecuted dog-on-a-string-and-funny-haircut brigade.

The first incident was at a gig to raise money for the prisoners from the Trafalgar Square poll tax riot. The venue management summoned the constabulary — on the eve of the anniversary of the demonstration against the tax in March last year — when a fight broke out. Speeding into action, the cops managed the half-mile journey in only 30 minutes, by which time the aggressor had been thrown out and the injured party had left.

This little fact did not prevent the Boyz 'n Blue from mounting a Rambo-style charge into the venue with their dogs and making more than a dozen arrests. Quite how this happened is not entirely clear, but a clue might be provided by allegations that the police had bundled out of their vans crying "this lot haven't paid their poll tax!" All those arrested were held in custody until after the next day's demonstration was over.

The three serious charges resulting from the incident were all supposed to have taken place nearby, some time later, after the 200-plus potential witnesses had conveniently dispersed. A bottle was allegedly thrown at a group of officers, one of whom, PC Andrew Thomas, told the court that he was there having followed his dog Sabre away from the venue.

The three defendants were originally charged with obstruction and violent disorder. All were recently acquitted after two juries at inner London's sessional court chose not to believe PC Hargreave's bizarre version of events: a "serious disturbance" at "an anti-poll tax meeting".

Hargreaves — also named in Parliament by the local MP Brian Sedgemoor for his role in the beating given to Maria Burke, the 73-year-old black woman recently paid £50,000 damages — went on to tell the court that 200 poll tax protestors had poured out on to the street for an impromptu midnight demonstration, attacking police officers in an utterly unprovoked fashion. In his summing up, the judge told the jury the defendants were "unfortunate people" who had been caught up in an incident, the origins of which "I don't know, you don't know".

The same week, charges of assaulting police brought against another squatter, John Williams, were dismissed at Highbury Corner court after the magistrate disbelieved PC Thomas's accusation that the defendant had spat at him. Indeed, the court would have had to recommend Mr Williams for a medal if they had convicted him. Thomas — who clearly has a habit of attracting mythical missiles — was 20 feet away from Williams when the latter's gob supposedly struck the copper's face through the open window of his car.

Given the court ruled that Williams had not spat at Thomas, the only remaining question concerns the nature of the "clear sticky fluid", the presence of which on Thomas's sleeve one of his colleagues attested to in court!

Charges of affray and obstruction against two other squatters arising from the same incident have been dropped. All these events allegedly followed a police raid on a party at a squatted pub in Stoke Newington. Despite the fact that it occurred in the wee small hours of the morning, some witnesses insist that the coppers somehow contrived to arrive directly from a neighbouring hostelry. A number of the officers were allegedly tired and emotional.

Inspector Knicker

THE *Police Review* is the latest publication to opine on the Alison Halford affair (see *Eyes passim*) and take the "nothing is what it seems" line.

With a circulation of around 27,000, it comes down squarely (*geddit?*) on the side of assistant chief constable Halford as it catalogues the inept way certain members of the Merseyside police authority (MPA) handled the fiasco. Clearly, the article hit the mark: the day after publication, David Henshaw, clerk to the Merseyside authority, denounced it for containing "factual inaccuracies of the very worst kind".

It raised the most interesting question of who leaked the story about Halford's alleged misconduct to the *Sunday Mirror* in August 1990, which appeared under a TOP COP ALISON IN STRIP-OFF STORM headline?

While the chief constable apologised to Halford for the way his press office had handled the story, the press office itself claimed it knew nothing about it and that none of its staff had spoken to the *Sunday Mirror*.

The fact is that on this and other matters, the MPA leaks like a sieve. The most recent example of this "colander" effect is the case of Rex Makin, Halford's solicitor. Details of a complaint he made to the police complaints authority over an incorrect parking offence were leaked to the local rag.

CANARY WHARF



Olympia & Yorkie bar meltdown

CANARY WHARF, surely the world's biggest building site and white elephant, is not the only problem besetting Olympia & York, its developer.

Reports from Canada reveal that O&Y's bankers are unhappy with the property giant's cash flow problems, while other reports tell of emergency bank funding of some £50 million needed to prop up the Docklands "adventure" of the Reichman brothers who run O&Y.

London Underground's claim (predicted in *Eye* 789) that O&Y cannot meet its first instalment on the Jubilee line extension to Canary Wharf is hardly good news; and nor are the massive cash depletions O&Y has suffered from a falling property market in North America, where bankers have started to move in.

The Canadian Imperial Bank Corporation (CIBC) called a meeting of lenders to see what could be done to stabilise the situation. CIBC has on its advisory board two interesting characters. The first is Conrad Black, the "Montreal Moosehead" and *Telegraph*

owner who has just moved his daily and Sunday titles into Canary Wharf's central tower (the *Sunday Telegraph* is on the 13th floor).

The second is the Hong Kong billionaire Li Kha Shing, a prominent property developer in Vancouver where companies associated with his family interests are building a massive residential and office complex on the site of the former Expo centre, called Concorde Pacific. This is said to be the largest development of its kind on the West Coast. Mrs Thatcher opened it and Li has given generously to the Conservative Party.

Mr Li, also through family interests, holds more than 10 percent of CIBC and earlier this year relieved the Reichman brothers of a New York property for around \$75 million. CIBC is said to be exposed on the O&Y debt somewhere close to \$1 billion (Canadian).

Last week the interests of Mr Li and his associates in O&Y and Canary Wharf were made public. But there are further clues to his likely movements in this country.

Hutchison Whampoa (UK) Ltd is the UK arm of a massive public company controlled by Li from Hong Kong. Its UK offices are at 9 Queen Street, Mayfair, where the tenants have recently been given three months' notice and Hutchison is moving in all manner of support staff such as accountants. Hutchison's current UK presence does not yet require a four-storey office block in Mayfair, although the firm is moving into the cellular communications industry in a big way.

How long it will be before Cantonese cuisine is served in the *Telegraph* canteen is anyone's guess.



In the City

TAX IS certainly something John Maples knows a lot about — and not just from being economic secretary to the Treasury for the past two years. A little known (because Maples does not exactly boast about it) facet of his career is the years he spent as a leading player in that prominent Caribbean tax haven, the Cayman Islands.

Maples formed the now prominent Cayman law firm of Maples & Calder with Douglas Calder after qualifying as a barrister in the sixties. The Caymans were then on the launching pad to becoming one of the major offshore funk holes for flight capital and hot money looking for a secure, secret home.

In 1964 the Caymans had two banks and no offshore company business. By 1981 it had 360 banks and more than 8,000 companies. Until 1986, by when the number of banks was nearer 500 and the offshore companies had trebled, the Caymans refused to give the US or other authorities access to bank records for whatever reason. It was even an offence to make inquiries about banking information.

But by then Maples had retired from the firm he founded and headed for London and a political career — Maples became MP for Lewisham West in 1983. He retired from Maples & Calder in 1974. Calder retired five years ago, but the firm still bears their names.

Strangely no mention of any pioneering role in helping to make the Caymans what it is today appears in Maples' *Who's Who* entry or in parliamentary profiles. It must obviously be a different John Maples.

NEWs that Elisabeth Maxwell, Cap'n Bob's widow, readily found £900,000 to finance sons Kevin and Ian's legal costs a month after Maxwell's death casts considerable doubt on her previous claims of penury.

Consider what she told *Vanity Fair* for its March edition: "I haven't salted away anything, because I never for a minute believed he'd leave me destitute. They say I have £500,000. Those are lies. I haven't anything... I didn't have access to funds... There's going to be no money anywhere."

How then did the penniless widow come up with almost £1 million without any trouble as soon as the boys asked? Two theories are advanced. One is that money was made available by a sympathetic benefactor. Heron boss Gerald Ronson is known to have been upset by Mrs Maxwell's plight (they shared a common interest in certain causes) although he had little time for Maxwell. The alternative view is that there may well still be funds controlled by the

trustees in Liechtenstein which are available at their discretion or through certain Maxwell associates abroad.

Given all the legal battles so far and those to come — the Serious Fraud Office is slowly closing the circle around Kevin, Ian and their acolytes — £900,000 isn't going to be enough. So where will the next cheque come from?

Shurely shome mishtake?

GOLDFINGER

Top Kinnock aide to be paid
bullion in tax avoidance plan

GOLD RUSH

Kinnock adviser's company pays
top staff in bullion to avoid tax

Mail on Sunday front page,
first and last editions, 29 March

NO doubt this Lord Hollick (oops) MAI "scoop" was welcomed by its owner, Viscount Rothermere, a man who knows a thing or two about avoiding tax. "Mere" became a tax exile years ago and his companies have been known to have their own tussles with the taxman about clever legal avoidance schemes. But then Labour hypocrisy is one thing, especially at election time. Tory hypocrisy, what is that?

THAT those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it is a lesson financial journalists seem incapable of learning. Take, for example, the sudden reemergence of "Changi Jim" Slater on City pages eager to broadcast word of his latest investment favourites.

Fiona Walsh of the *Sunday Times* (8 March) was just one of those (others were the *Sunday Telegraph* and the *Independent's* Neil Thapar) happy to let it be known that "Jim's in" P.E. Kemp. She also brought news of his fondness for Maddox Group and Wharfedale.

Michael Walters devoted half a page of the *Daily Mail* (14 March) to these and other Slater tips. "Suggest to him that outsiders hear what he is up to only when it suits him to tickle the price up a little and he chuckles". Walters should know. He was around when Slater was doing not just that, but selling as those who followed the hacks' tips steamed in. But then the *Mail* was always a Slater booster

through its long time City editor, "Sir" Patrick Sergeant.

Let us now therefore praise infamous men. Newer kids on the City block should know the following about James Derrick Slater before they rush to help his portfolio's performance.

When Slater wrote the Capitalist share tip column for the *Sunday Telegraph* between 1963 and 1965 he regularly puffed shares in which he was an undisclosed investor and sold soon after he had recommended a purchase.

Slater was convicted in 1979 on 15 counts of breaching Section 54 of the Companies Act through using £4 million of Slater Walker money to secretly buy its own shares during 1973-74.

Slater organised and participated in two secret SW executive share incentive schemes through Spydar Securities and Tokengate Investment which acquired shares in SW satellites abroad on what would by most observers be classed as inside information making multi-million pound profits.

When Slater walked out of Slater Walker in 1975, the Bank of England had to walk in and put up £110 million of taxpayers' money to prevent the collapse of its banking arm.

Only a desire by the Bank and the Labour government to preserve confidence and avoid embarrassment prevented a full scale Department of Trade & Industry investigation into Slater Walker which would have disinterred even more skeletons.

Slater only narrowly avoided extradition to Singapore on charges concerning Spydar and other SW activities. His lieutenant, Dick Tarling, was less fortunate: he spent four months in Changi prison.

Hardly a record to commend a share tipster.

● One City observer who must watch Slater's Nixon-like rehabilitation with interest is solicitor George Staple, the new director of the Serious Fraud Office. He represented Slater in the Section 54 and Singapore cases.

THOSE in the City who do not like Amber Day's Philip Green — a small army, judging by the recent "bear" raids — do not appear to have paid enough attention to his first supposed success, the Bonanza, FUs and Jean Jeanie businesses he sold to Lee Cooper in February 1986.

Green put together a number of struggling jeans companies under the umbrella of Lunabond at a cost of £4.5 million. Lunabond was then sold to Lee Cooper for £3 million cash plus an earn-out from the anticipated profits over the next three years. Green did not wait around to see what happened. He resigned in September 1987. The next year Lee Cooper wrote off half the value put on the Lunabond companies. "It was a romance that wasn't made in heaven," says Green. Lee Cooper shareholders would no doubt say FU too.

'Slicker'

JOHN KENT
PRESENTS

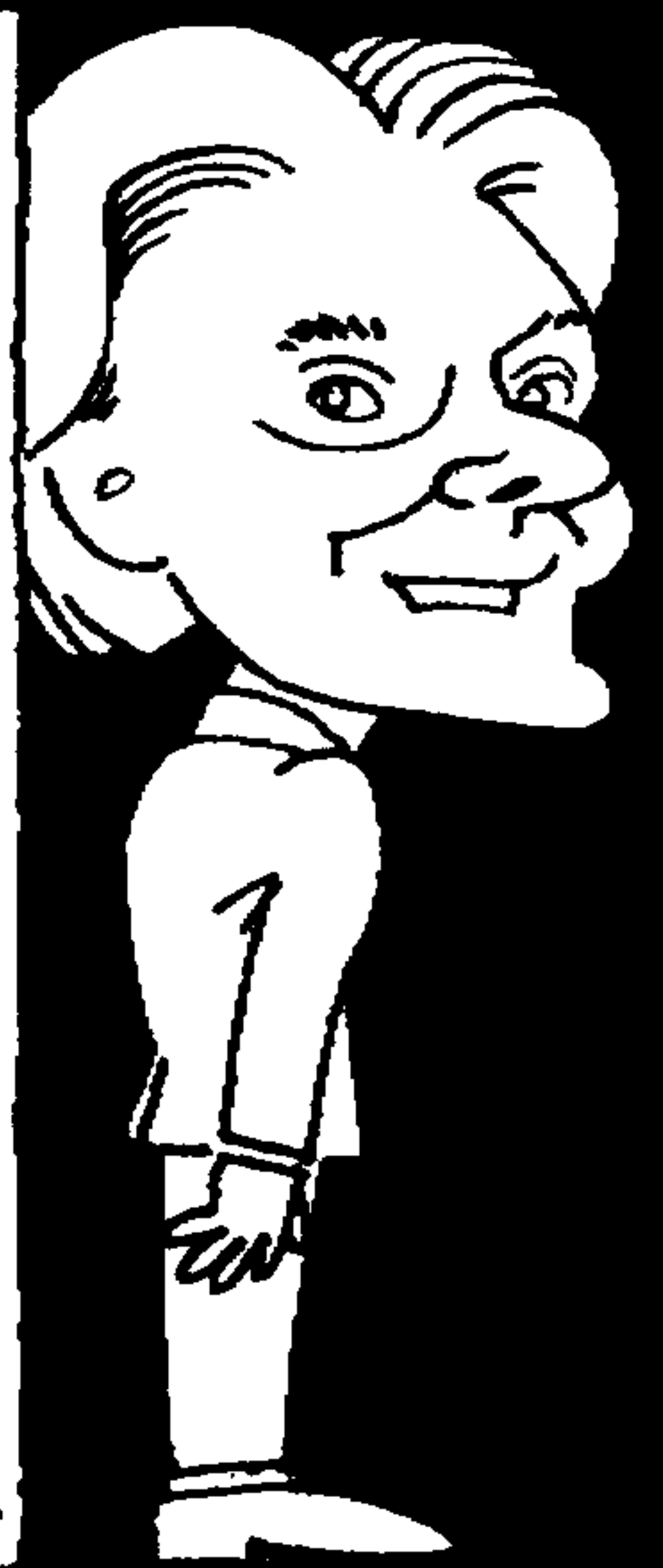
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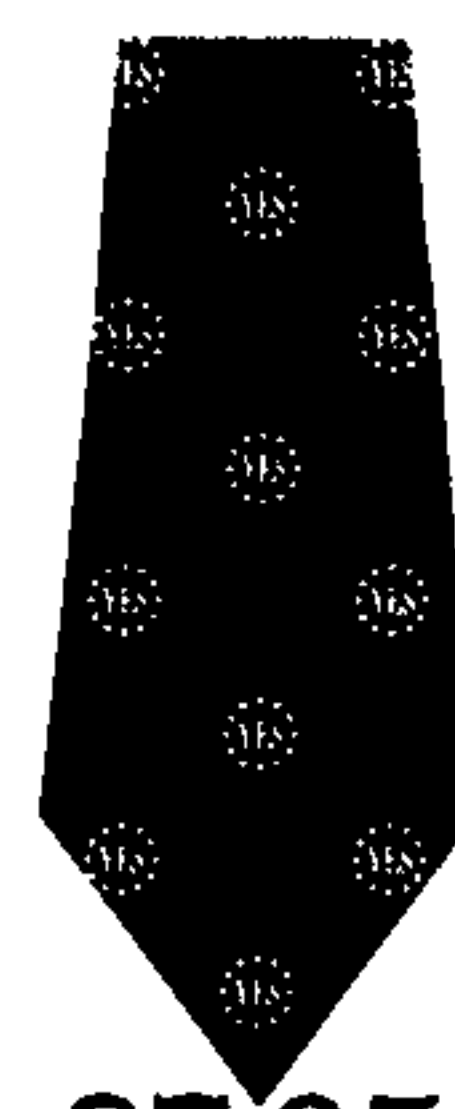
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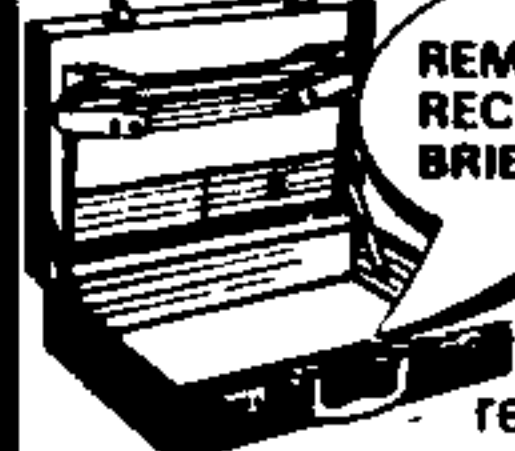
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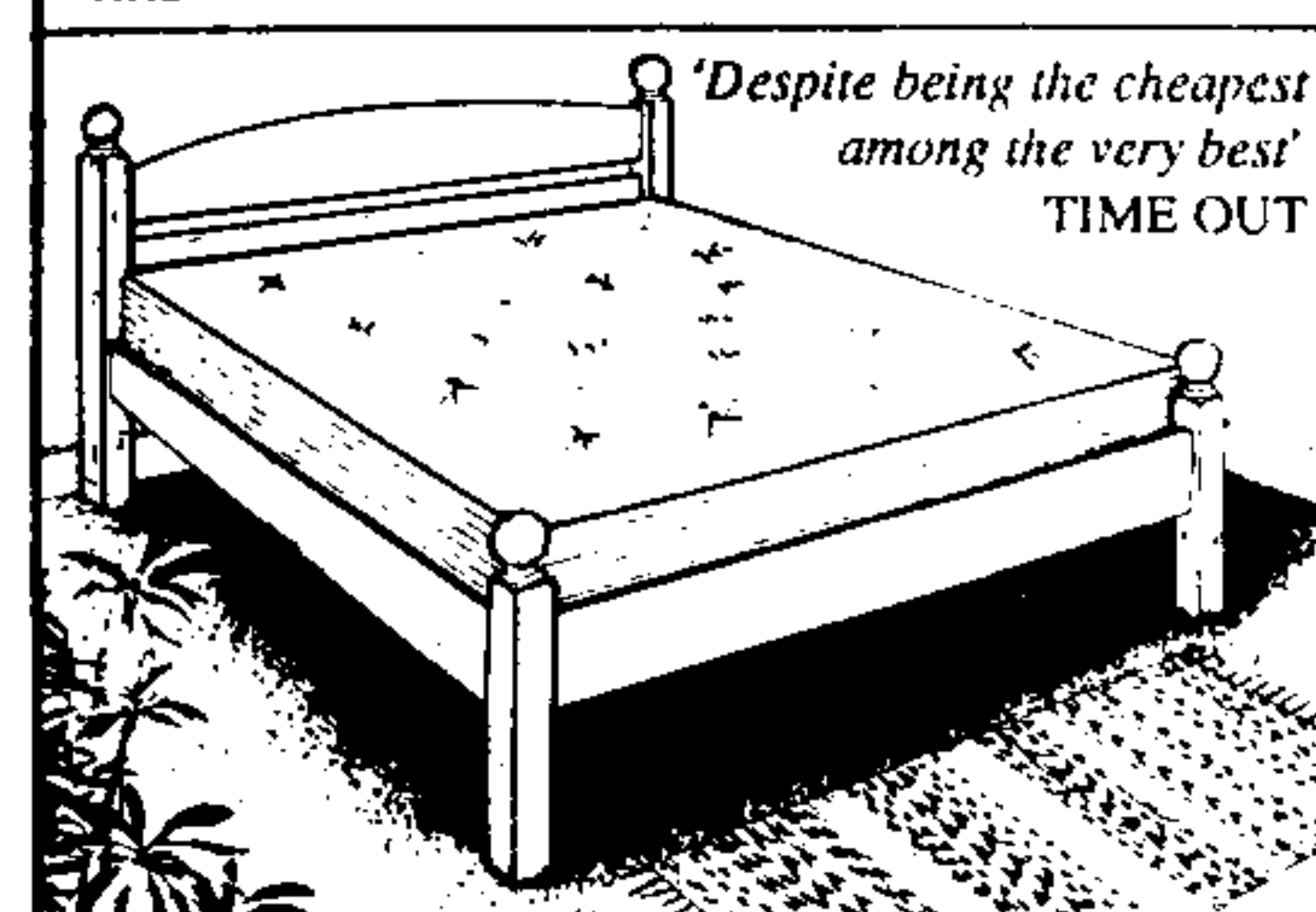
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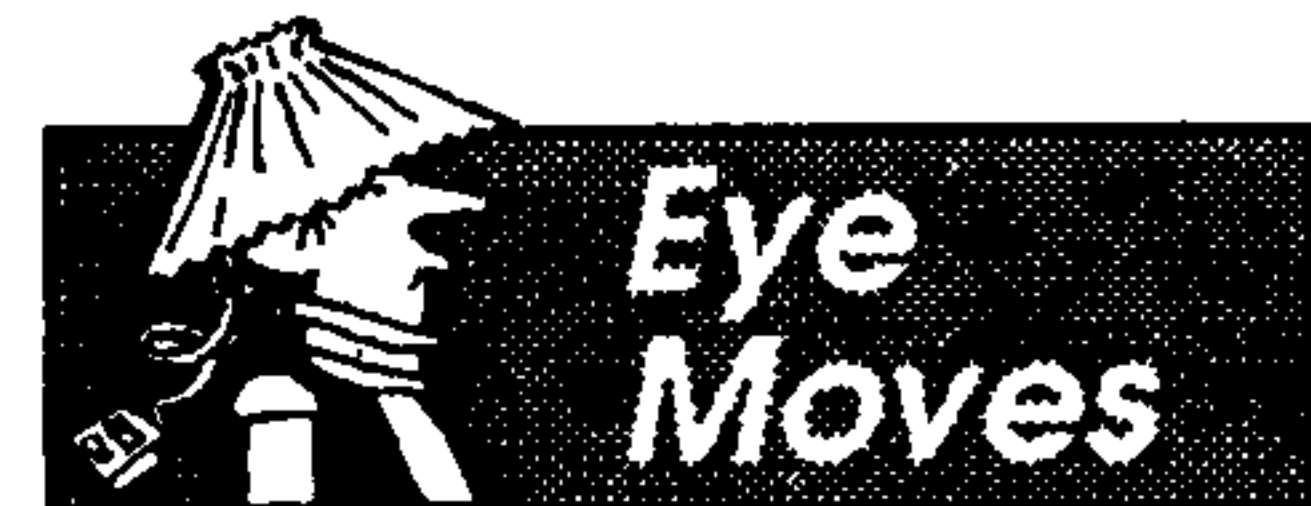
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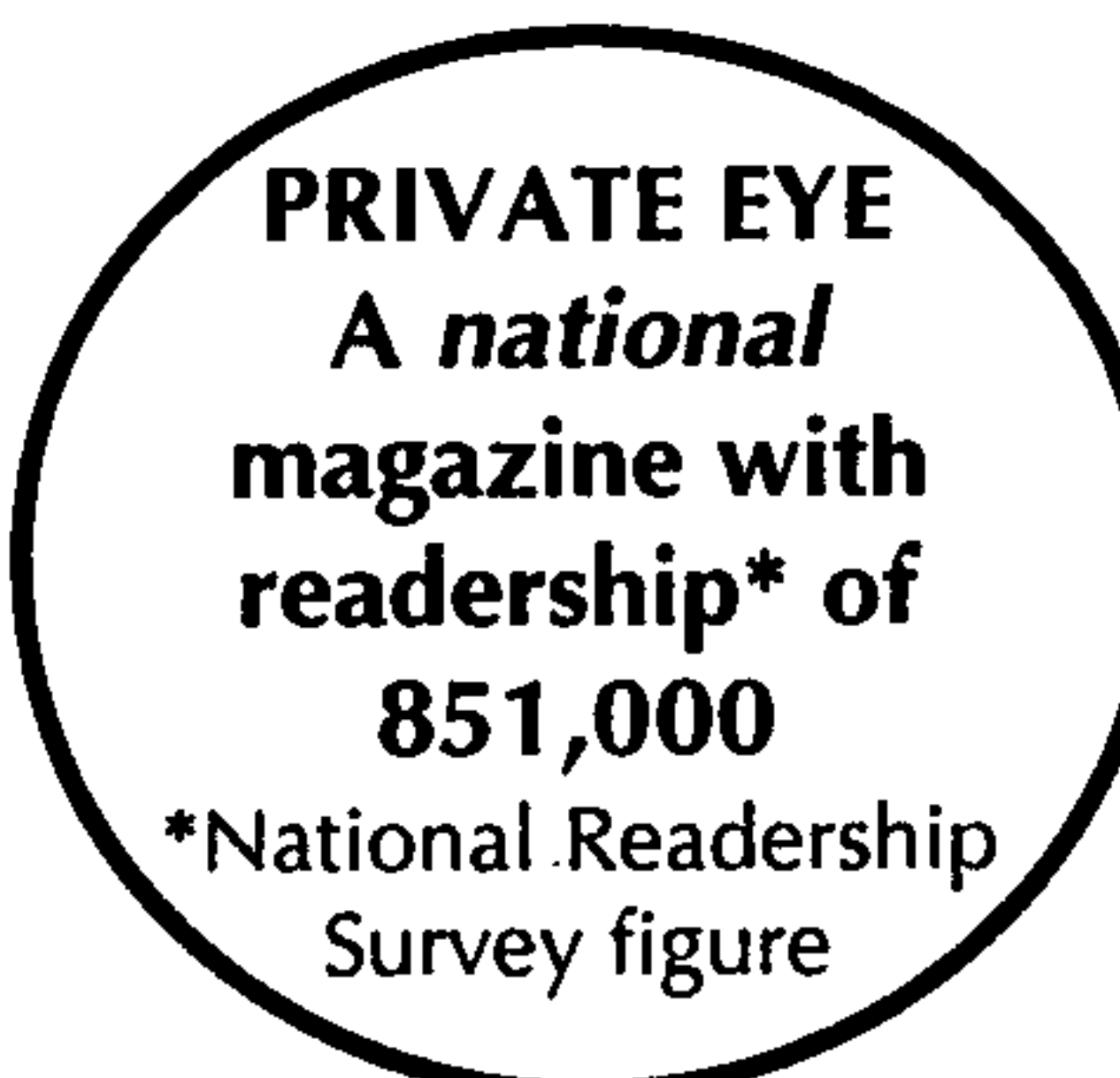
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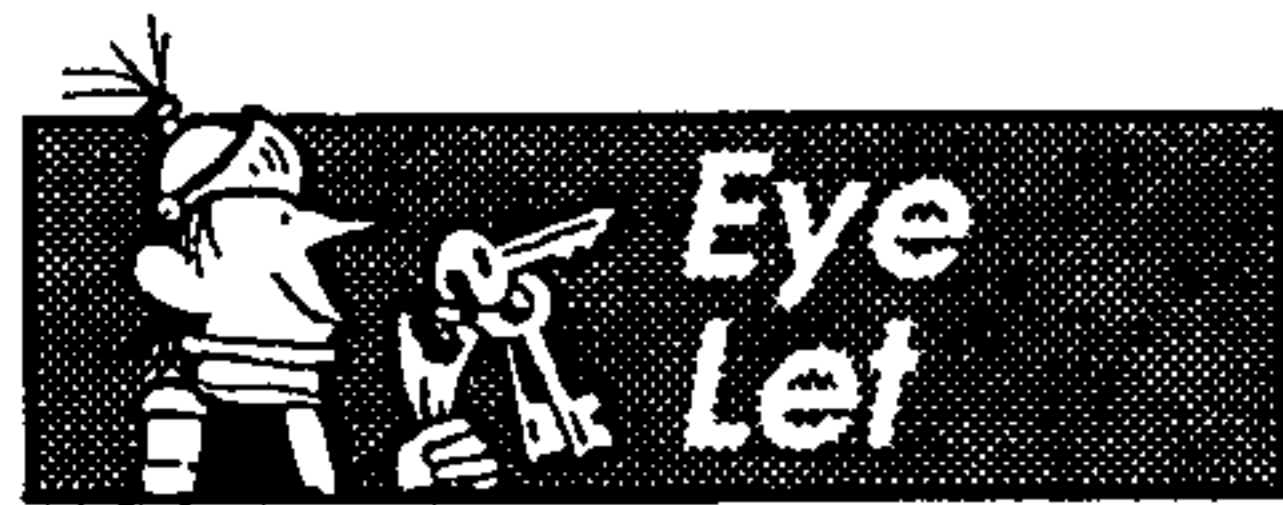
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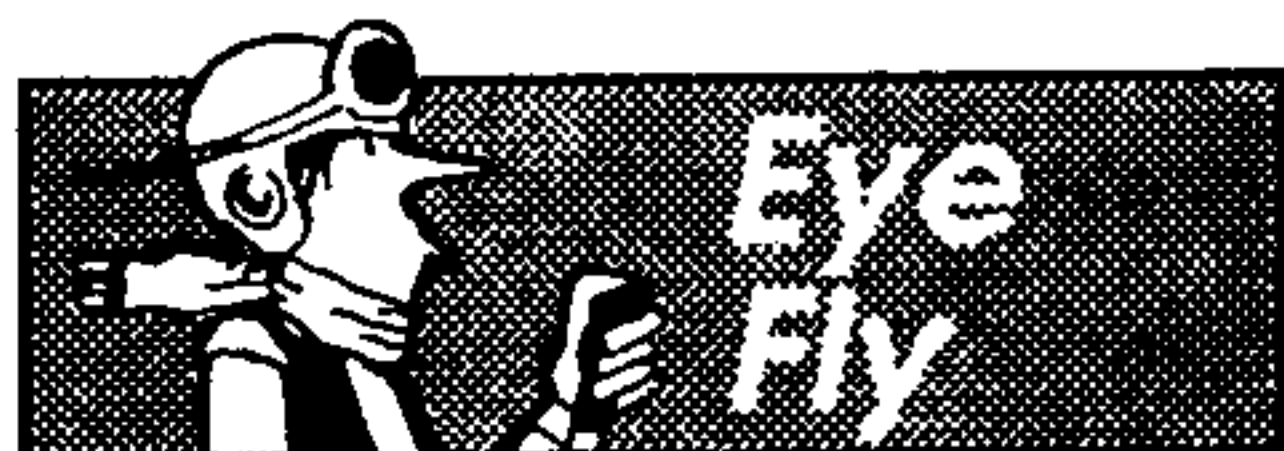
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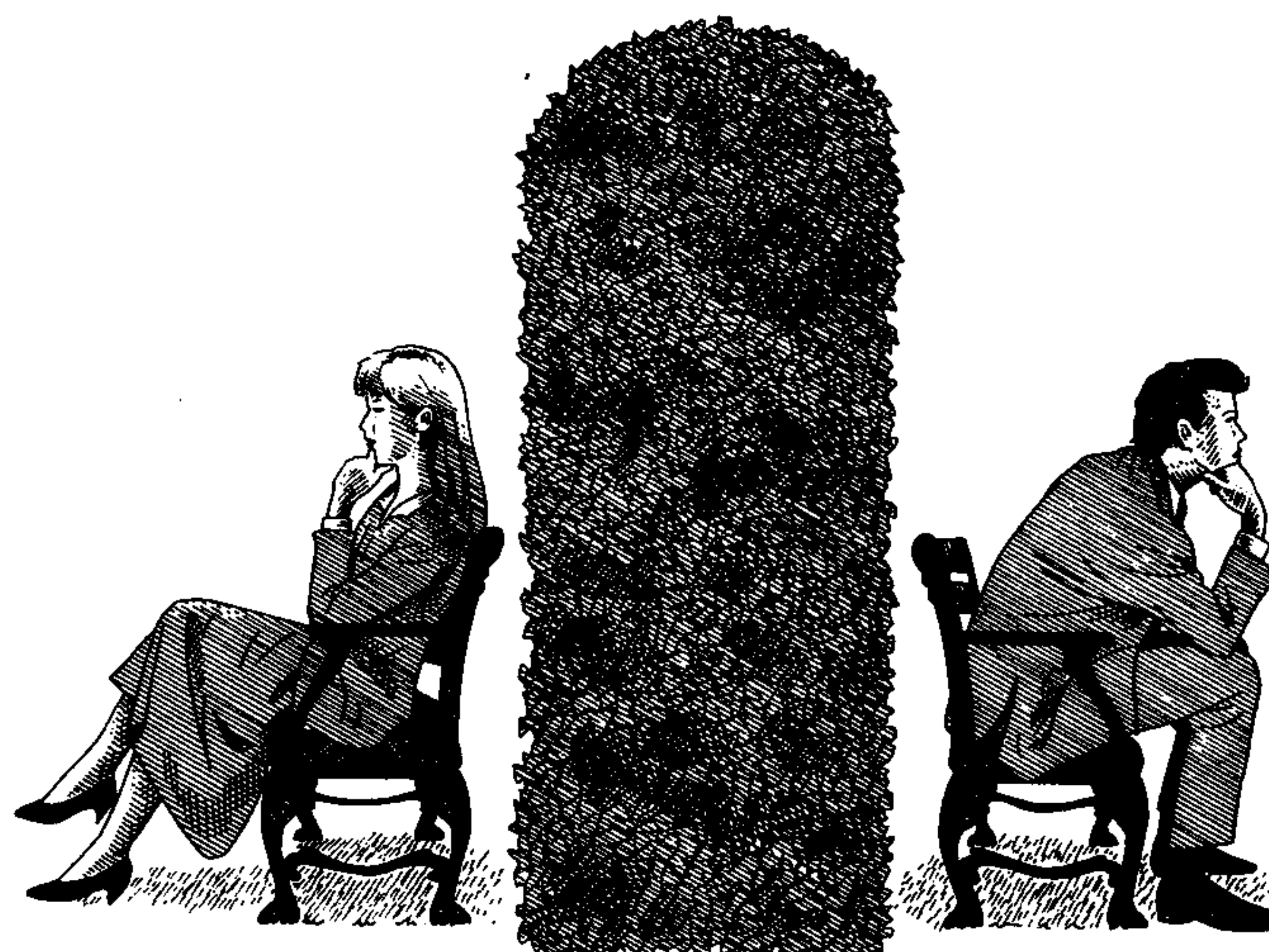
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If you respond to this advertisement, you'll be sent a very detailed questionnaire. First, you're asked to answer some fairly straightforward questions about yourself: your general appearance, your background, your education, religion, politics — and so on. Next you're asked to describe the kind of person you'd like to meet by answering the same set of questions. You can even specify WHERE you'd like to meet them. (It's little use our finding you the right person in John O'Groats if you live at Land's End).

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